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Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Seventh periodic report of States parties

El Salvador*

* The present report is being issued without formal editing.

For the initial report submitted by the Government of El Salvador, see CEDAW/C/5/Add.19 which was considered by the Committee at its fifth session. For the second periodic report, see CEDAW/C/13/Add.12 which was considered by the Committee at its eleventh session. For the combined third and fourth periodic report, see CEDAW/C/SLV/3-4 which was considered by the Committee at its twenty-eighth session. For the fifth periodic report, see CEDAW/C/SLV/5 which was considered by the Committee at its twenty-eighth session. For the sixth periodic report, see CEDAW/C/SLV/6 which was considered by the Committee at its twenty-seventh session.

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I. Introduction

The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was adopted in El Salvador by Executive Decision No. 317 of 4 May 1981 of the Revolutionary Government Junta, ratified through Decree No. 705 of 2 June 1981 of the Revolutionary Government Junta, and entered into force on 3 September 1981 in accordance with article 27 of the Convention.

El Salvador recognizes the importance of these commitments acquired through the ratification of international conventions and treaties, as is registered in article 144 of the Constitution, which states that: "The international treaties that El Salvador concludes with other States or international organizations shall become laws of El Salvador when they come into force in accordance with their provisions and the Constitution. The law may not amend or repeal the provisions of a treaty that is in force for El Salvador. In the event of a conflict between the treaty and the law, the treaty shall prevail."

In view of this, CEDAW forms part of the country's secondary legislation, which means that all necessary efforts must be made to implement and monitor it. In this regard, the present report is being submitted pursuant to article 18 of the Convention, which states that: "States Parties undertake to submit to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, for consideration by the Committee, a report on the legislative, judicial, administrative or other measures which they have adopted to give effect to the provisions of the present Convention and on the progress made in this respect."

This report is intended to fulfil this commitment, for which reason a reply has been prepared for each of the observations made by the Committee, based on the "**Main areas of concern and recommendations**", taking into account the recommendations on gender-specific data and processes reflecting the evolution and impact of programmes targeting the female population. Information is also provided on actions undertaken by the Salvadoran State undertakes with women from the indigenous population, recognizing that in El Salvador it is very hard to define indigenous peoples on the basis of mixed race, since this is an inherent characteristic of the country.

Consideration of the combined third and fourth, and the fifth and sixth periodic reports of the State party: Report on each observation made by the Committee

The Committee expresses concern that, despite the spheres, these laws and policies have not been effectively implemented. The Committee is also concerned that the Salvadoran Constitution does not specifically prohibit gender discrimination; nor does it include the definition of discrimination contained in the Convention. Moreover, while the legislation refers to equality in the exercise of civil and political rights, it does not mention economic, social and cultural rights. Equally, the Committee is concerned that the Penal Code only sanctions "serious" discrimination and the discriminatory features that remain in the Agrarian Code.

This concern of the Committee has been taken seriously into consideration. In El Salvador, equality in the exercise of civil and political rights is crucial to the upholding of economic, social and cultural rights.

Within this framework, it is clear that economic, social and cultural rights are included in the Constitution of the Republic of El Salvador in the following articles:

- Article 32. Chapter II, Social Rights (First Section, The Family) states that: "The family is the fundamental basis of society and shall have the protection of the State, which shall dictate the necessary legislation and create the appropriate organizations and services for its integration, well-being and social, cultural and economic development."
- Article 37. Labour and Social Security (Chapter II, Second Section) "Labour is a social function; it enjoys the protection of the State and is not regarded as an article of commerce. The State shall employ all resources that are in its reach to provide employment to manual or intellectual workers, and to ensure him and his family the economic conditions for dignified existence. In the same form, it shot promote the work and the employment of people with physical, mental or social limitations or disabilities."
- Article 53. Education, Science and Culture (Chapter II, Third Section) "The right to an education and culture is inherent to the human person; in consequence, the preservation, promotion and dissemination of culture is an obligation and primary end of the State.
- Article 65. Public Health and Social Assistance (Chapter II, Fourth Section) "The health of the inhabitants of the Republic constitutes a public good. The state and the persons are obligated to see its conservation and restoration. The State shall determine the National health policy and shall control and supervise its application."
- Article 71. Citizens, their Political Rights and Duties, in the Electoral Body. (Chapter III): "All Salvadorans more than eighteen years old are citizens."
- Article 72. "The political rights of the citizen are:
  - The exercise of suffrage;
  - To associate oneself to constitute political parties in accordance with the law and to join those already formed;
  - To opt for public posts complying with the requirements determined by this Constitution and secondary laws.
- Article 101. Economic Order (Title V) "The economic order shall essentially answer to principles of social justice that tend to ensure to all inhabitants of the country a dignified existence of the human being. The State shall promote economic and social development through the increase of production, productivity and the rational utilization of the resources. With the same end, it shall foment the diverse sectors of production and shall defend the interest of consumers."

In relation to the Committee's concern that only "serious discrimination" is sanctioned in El Salvador, the Penal Code contains an article on discrimination and

complements its sanction, with the aim of upholding the right to non-discrimination. This article states literally: INFRINGEMENTS OF THE RIGHT TO EQUALITY; *Article 292.- Any public official or employee or agent of any authority or public authority who, on grounds of nationality, race, sex, religion or any other attribute of an individual, denies that individual any of the individual rights recognized under the Constitution of the Republic, shall be liable to between one and three years' imprisonment and shall be disqualified from exercising their functions or holding their post during that time.*

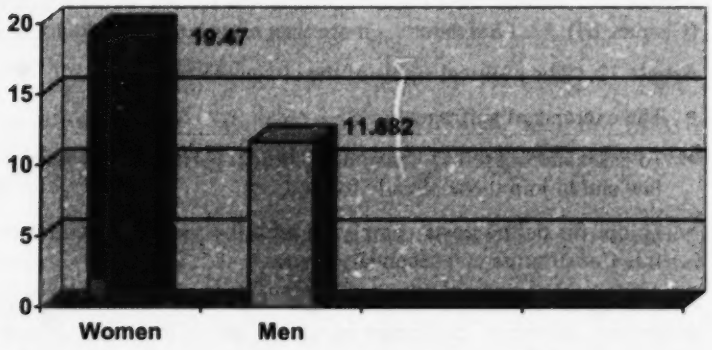
With regard to the Committee's concern at the persistence of discrimination in the Agrarian Code, we would point out that current legislation in El Salvador does not contain an Agrarian Code, so it is unclear where Committee's comments originate.

The Ministry of Agriculture, in fulfilment of one of the objectives of the Agriculture, Livestock, Fishing, Aquaculture and Food area of the National Policy on Women, proposes "increasing women's productive capacity by promoting property rights and access for women, under equal conditions with men, to capital, resources (land, credit, technology), information, technical assistance, employment, markets and commerce under equal conditions with men, and updating agrarian law and the legal regulatory framework governing agricultural cooperatives.

In fulfilment of this objective through the action entitled "Review of the current situation in relation to legalization of land for rural women, to streamline established mechanisms and guarantee that these effectively favour women", the programme to establish legal certainty of title to land in the agriculture sector has been implemented, granting agricultural land plots and "solares"[1] for housing, benefiting a total of 19,470 women and 11,682 men in the period 2003-2005.

Figure 1

Beneficiaries of legal certainty in respect of land titles



The Committee encourages the State party to fully incorporate the principle of non-discrimination into its legislation, as expressed in the Convention, and thereby make progress toward achieving *de jure* equality as an indispensable premise for achieving *de facto* equality for women. The Committee also

[1] The term "Solares" is used in El Salvador to refer to land subdivisions smaller than plots.

recommends amending or eliminating concepts that are inconsistent with the provisions of the Convention, to protect and guarantee the exercise of women's human rights.

Article 144 of the Constitution establishes that "The international treaties formalized /celebrados/ by El Salvador with other States or international organisms, constitute laws of the Republic once they enter into effect, in conformity with the dispositions of the same treaty and of this Constitution.

The law shall not modify or repeal that agreed in a treaty in effect for El Salvador. **In case of conflict between the treaty and the law, the treaty shall prevail**." It can thus be inferred that the Convention forms part of the laws of El Salvador, and has a higher rank than secondary legislation whenever there is a conflict between them, thus giving it greater legal weight.

In addition, a constant effort is being made to adapt treaties to secondary legislation by setting up special commissions and working groups to review the discriminatory aspects of domestic laws, having created the Inter-Institutional Juridical Commission of the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women (ISDEMU). This consists of representatives of the Executive Board, the head of the ISDEMU Legal Unit, representatives of the Supreme Court of Justice, Office of the Attorney General of the Republic, the Legislative Assembly, the National Secretariat for the Family, the Technical Secretariat of the Office of the President, the National Judiciary Council, the Ministry of the Interior and Family Courts, the purpose of which is to review legislation and adapt it to international laws that affect the institutions involved, in accordance with the topic in question. In addition, the Legislative Assembly's Committee for Women, Childhood and Adolescence has an Inter-Institutional Technical Commission, and both commissions collaborate on an inter-institutional basis.

All of this reflects application of the concept of discrimination contained in the Convention, at the national level.

The Committee is concerned that actions for training, awareness raising and dissemination of the Convention are faltering.

The Salvadoran State, acting through ISDEMU, with the aim of promoting fulfilment of the Convention and all other instruments for the advancement of women, coordinates the promotion, dissemination and fulfilment of its articles on an inter-institutional basis at the government and non-governmental levels, as well as preparing country reports for submission to the CEDAW Committee.

The ISDEMU training component on gender theory, aimed at women and men of various ages and educational levels throughout the country, includes all ratified international commitments for the purpose of promoting their dissemination and ensuring their fulfilment by the Salvadoran State.

Promotion and dissemination of women's rights is also assumed by other government institutions such as the National Secretariat for the Family, with the aim of eliminating discrimination against women, in the different cycles of their life and especially against the disabled. To fulfil this commitment, the National Secretariat for the Family has formulated and published the following instruments.

- The national policy on comprehensive development of children and adolescents;

- The national policy for comprehensive services for older adults;
- The Old-Age (Comprehensive Care) Act
- The Disabled Persons Equal Opportunities Act.
- The Strategic Plan on Mental Health.

The Committee recommends the State party implement dissemination, training and awareness-raising programmes that help improve knowledge of the Convention, in particular targeting Salvadoran women and personnel responsible for justice administration.

The Convention is a tool used by the various inter-institutional commissions that implement the National Policy on Women, which include the Convention in their training and awareness-raising processes for men and women.

These inter-institutional commissions are established in each of the areas of National Policy on Women. The legislative area has a Judicial Commission responsible for constant and continuous review of legislation, both old and modern, and for drafting reforms that guarantee respect for women's fundamental liberties and human rights. This process has already begun in a number of government agencies by their fulfilment of international commitments and the National Policy on Women.

This task has specifically resulted in women incorporating an awareness of their rights and duties as human beings, into the process of seeking responses both in justice administration and public administration.

The action plans of the National Policy on Women have focused on two types of action: first, to facilitate the coordination and training of professionals working in justice administration; and second, to provide women with a basic understanding of their rights and the practical possibilities of using the justice system to the full. This process is continued in the 2005-2009 Plan of Action, with the variant that its scope of action will be expanded in public administration and other sectors of the population.

The specific objective proposed for this area is "To uphold the principle of equality before the law for men and women at the various levels of the legal system"; and, to fulfil this, the Judicial Commission is preparing a work plan for the next four years, which includes training for justice administration staff.

In fulfilment of a National Policy on Women, government institutions are implementing the following actions:

- In the local domain, through the culture houses (Casas de Cultura) network (which are present in 14 of the country's departments) women's rights and conventions relating to the advancement of women are periodically publicized, along with issues relating to self-esteem, the consequences of early pregnancy, gender equity, women in history, and other topics.
- The National Secretariat for the Family (SNF) undertakes actions on behalf of women in the following areas: housing, health, labour, education, dissemination of rights, among others, in harmony with the Government's "Safe Country" Plan, particularly in the Presidential programme

"Opportunities for Women Heads of Household", while coordinating actions with public and private institutions and international agencies.

Although the Committee welcomes the creation of the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women (ISDEMU) as a government mechanism that oversees the implementation of the National Policy on Women (PNM), the Committee is concerned by the fact that the Institute does not have its proper role as a governing and supervisory body; nor does it have sufficient political, institutional and budgetary capacity to define, implement, oversee and guarantee a global policy for the elimination of discrimination against women, which would be executed effectively by the various sectors of government. The Committee also expresses its concern at the insufficient active linkage between the Institute and women's organizations representing civil society interests.

In its role as lead agency of the National Policy on Women,[2] ISEDEMU has developed three plans of action as policy implementation instruments, through inter-institutional and multidisciplinary coordination with 43 executing agencies, at the government and non-governmental levels.[3] These officially designate liaisons and commissions for gender policy planning and mainstreaming.

Recognition is also given to the prevention and care work done by ISDEMU in relation to domestic violence. This is based on an amendment to the Domestic Violence Act in 2004, which establishes ISDEMU as the lead agency pursuant to article 6-A: "The Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women will act as lead agency with responsibility for designing, directing, advising, coordinating and overseeing the fulfilment of policies, programmes, plans and projects relating to prevention and care services in respect of domestic violence. To effectively fulfil its brief, the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women will encourage participation by governmental and non-governmental organizations, local governments, private enterprise, churches, international agencies and others, to establish the coordination mechanisms needed to integrate the various State and society institutions to prevent, tackle, protect and help resolve the problem of domestic violence."

ISDEMU is also coordinating implementation and review of the National Plan against Domestic Violence, for which it has established an Inter-Institutional Agreement to Prevent and Address the Problem of Domestic Violence, with 15 institutions[4] participating in its execution.

As lead agency, it also promotes and develops participatory and comprehensive processes for diagnostic studies, training, project preparation, and incorporation of the gender perspective in institutional governmental policies, local governments and non-governmental institutions; and it also trains technical and administrative teams drawn from the public sector, professionals, students, and other sectors nationwide.

ISDEMU has a board of directors consisting of representatives from the following institutions: National Secretariat for the Family, the Ministries of Public Health and

[2] The structure of the National Policy on Women contains four lines of development and 12 areas of action. The structure of the PNM is attached.

[3] The section containing the annexes lists the institutions with which implementation of the National Policy on Women is coordinated.

[4] The institutions forming part of this Convention are listed in the annex.

Social Assistance, Education, Agriculture, Labour and Social Security, and the Interior; along with public prosecution institutions, such as the Office of the Attorney General of the Republic, the Office of the Auditor General of the Republic, a representative of the Inter-American Commission on Women CIM/OAS, and representatives of women's NGOs, which take decisions and influence sector policies with a view to eliminating the various forms of discrimination against women.

The National Secretariat for the Family, Pursuant to articles 6 and 9 of the law creating the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women, along with the President and Legal Representative of the Board of Directors, exercise the functions and powers conferred by that law, doing whatever is necessary to strengthen the Institution's budget.

To monitor implementation of the National Policy on Women and the advancement of women, baselines have been constructed for the main statistical indicators in each area, and each action has a fulfilment indicator. The impact of actions is measured in coordination with institutional Liaison Committees for the purpose of establishing new strategies of intervention to make the necessary changes.

Over the last four years, ISDEMU has intensified its work not only in El Salvador but also regionally and internationally. This arduous task has resulted in the central government appointing the Institute as the governing and coordinating body for Objective 3 of the Millennium Development Goals, known as "MESA No. 3". This consists of representatives of international cooperation agencies from the European Union and the United Nations,[5] and aims to "become a mechanism that helps achieve international commitments on gender equity and women's advancement, specifically the Millennium Development Goals to achieve an equitable and fair society in El Salvador."

In the regional domain, El Salvador, acting through ISDEMU, has pooled efforts with Ministries for Women's Affairs throughout the region, to establish the Council of Women's Ministers of Central America (COMMCA)[6] which has now been incorporated into the Central American Integration Secretariat (SICA). This Council has prepared a strategic plan for 2006-2009 to place women's interests on the agenda and as part of the institutional framework of Central American Integration, prioritizing strategies to promote women's economic autonomy, comprehensive healthcare and political participation.

The levels of responsibility acquired by the Institute, have been recognized by the Government and the Salvadoran State, through the implementation of strategies that help increase women's productive engagement. In this regard, and in coordination with local governments, production and training centres for women have been set up, and productive initiatives have been implemented for women in extremely poor municipalities, since the aims of presidential programmes include helping to improve the situation of women heads of household.

[5] International cooperation institutions forming part of "Mesa No.3": European Union (EU), the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (AECI), the Gender Area of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), USA/El Salvador, Oxfam America, UNICEF, Japanese Cooperation (JICA), the German Cooperation Agency (GTZ), ILO/IPEC, Italian Cooperation, and the Technical Secretariat of the Office of the President of El Salvador.

[6] The countries belonging to the Council of Women's Ministers of Central America (COMMCA) are Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Panama.

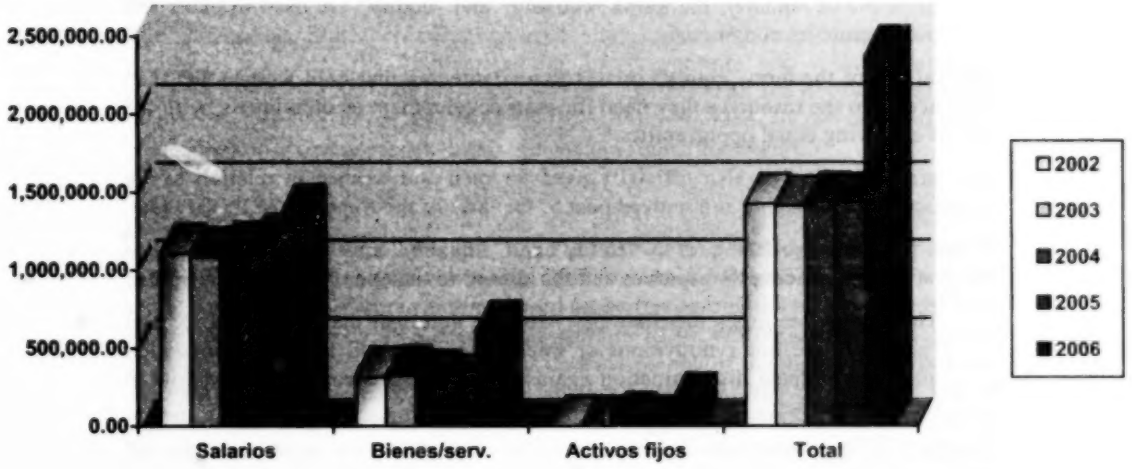
The Institute, for its part, is implementing strategies to improve the quality of life in this population sector, and for 2006 it has the goal of implementing nine women's training and production centres in extremely poor municipalities. These centres are implemented in accordance with the needs of women and the locality, to focus them on strengthening capacities and influencing local development.

The Committee encourages the State to continue strengthening the role of ISDEMU as the regulatory and supervisory body, providing it with sufficient budget and authority in the framework of State institutions to oversee gender mainstreaming and the promotion of gender equality. It also recommends that the Institute develop closer collaboration and joint work with women's civil society organizations.

As a reflection of the government's recognition of the Institute's work, in 2006 it obtained a 73.40 per cent increase in its budget, as shown in the following comparative table of institutional expansion and annual budgets from 2002 to 2006.

Figure 2

Comparative table of institutional expansion and annual budgets 2002-2006



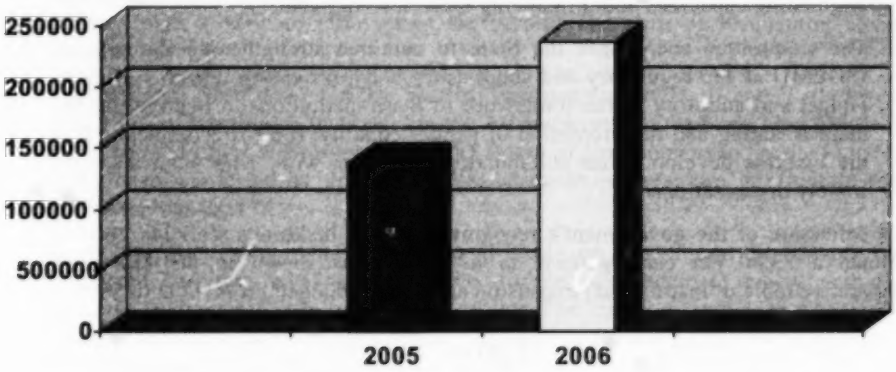
With the budget increase, the territorial scope of intervention and implementation of the National Policy on Women will be expanded in its four development hubs and 12 areas of intervention,[7] dealing in particular with the needs of rural women, implementing investment projects, including the opening of ISDEMU branches to provide services for victims of domestic violence in the departments of Sonsonate and Morazán, and equipping six women's training and production centres in municipalities classified as extremely poor, which are sustained by local governments and coordinated work with NGOs.

Territorial expansion will facilitate the implementation and coordination of local development projects with NGOs.

[7] The structure of the National Policy on Women is provided in the annex.

Figure 3

Comparative budget 2005 and 2006



> The Committee notes with concern that, although the Constitution refers to the principle of equality, the terms "equality" and "equity" are used in plans and programmes synonymously.

Official use of the term "equity" relates to guaranteeing that both women and men have access to the resources they need for their development as individuals, with the aim of achieving equal opportunities.[8]

The term "equality" is also officially used for men and women in relation to the exercise of human rights and with respect to the laws of the Republic of El Salvador.

Within this framework, the terms "equity" and "equality" and not synonyms, since the first refers to access to resources and the second to the exercise of human rights.

> The Committee urges the State party to take note that the terms "equity" and "equality" are not synonymous or interchangeable; and that the Convention aims to eliminate discrimination against women and ensure equality between men and women.

Article 3 of the Constitution of the Republic of El Salvador establishes that all persons are equal before the law. No restrictions on the exercise of civil rights may be established on the grounds of differences in nationality, race, sex or religion. Hereditary offices or privileges shall not be recognized.

ISDEMU, as lead agency of the National Policy on Women, which proclaims "Empowering the comprehensive development of women in all domains of society, under conditions of equity and equality with men, through their active participation in national development policies."

Following the UNESCO[9] definition, "equity" is officially defined in El Salvador as:

- "equal opportunities and rights for women and men"

[8] "Basic Gender Course" of the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women (ISDEMU).

[9] New words for a new world. UNESCO Peace Culture Programme. El Salvador.

- "recognizing women's needs"
- and as a result of the foregoing, outcomes will be equal.

Social, political and economic equity will be achieved if women have the same access as men to education, health, property, credit, technology, etc.

> Although the Committee welcomes the effort made by the State party to combat domestic violence, through the recent establishment of a National Plan on Domestic Violence, it is concerned at the persistence of violence against women in El Salvador. The Committee is also concerned about the legal consequences of reconciliation between the abuser and the victim in the pre-judicial phase which could result to the detriment of the victim.

Violence against women, whether perpetrated in the public or private domain, is founded on an unequal exercise of power resulting from the social establishment of gender differences that place women at a disadvantage in relation to men, along with other vulnerable groups such as children, adolescents, adults and the disabled. Eliminating these socio-structural gender inequalities is a challenge that goes beyond legal actions and the consolidation of a secure infrastructure. Intervention is needed to generate changes in cultural models that leave women disadvantaged and unprotected against violence.

The Salvadoran State considers violence against women to be a serious social problem, requiring the implementation of prevention and awareness-raising programmes, targeting both men and women, together with the development inter-institutional, inter-sectoral and multidisciplinary programmes of services that allow for a comprehensive approach within the human rights framework.

In this context, the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women, as the lead agency for the Domestic Violence Act and the National Plan to Prevent and Deal with Domestic Violence, has the aims of preventing and detecting the social problem of violence against women, and providing protection and services for victims, through substantive actions based on current international and national laws on violence. In this it give special recognition to preventing and addressing the problem of domestic violence, which is considered one of the most widespread and extreme forms of violence perpetrated against women. Moreover, with the aim of fulfilling this objective, ISDEMU coordinates the Inter-Institutional Committee to Prevent and Deal with Domestic Violence, through the Programme to Improve Family Relations.

In a framework of respect and exercise of human rights, the Salvadoran State has started work with abusers, especially in terms of the prevention, psychological care and re-education of violent men, with the aim of improving interpersonal relations between men and women. It has also established Accessory and Therapeutic Penalties, considered in the articles of the Penal Code that are described below:

Accessory penalties.

Article 46.- The following are accessory penalties:

1. The penalty of total disqualification, lasting from six months to 35 years;
2. The penalty of special disqualification, lasting from six months to 30 years;

3. The penalty of expulsion from national territory in the case of foreigners; and,

4. The penalty of deprivation of the right to drive motor vehicles, lasting from three months to six years in cases specified by the law.

5. The penalty of compulsory therapy will be established as an accessory penalty in cases of crimes against sexual freedom, subject to a prior expert review.

Nonetheless, disqualification penalties may also be imposed as main penalties in cases determined by this Code.

Accessory penalties will be fulfilled at the same time as the main penalty.

Penalty of compulsory therapy.

Article 61-A.- The penalty of compulsory therapy consists of systematic attendance at psychosocial re-education support sessions, either individually or in a group, with professionals that help the convicted person to change violent behaviour patterns.

The Salvadoran Social Security Institute is also implementing a programme entitled "Prevention and management of gender violence", which includes courses on prevention and care for domestic violence, targeting a multidisciplinary public: doctors, nurses, psychologists and health educators, to enable them to detect cases of violence in their patients.

Bearing in mind General Recommendation 19 on violence against women, the Committee urges the State party to take practical steps to monitor the enforcement legislation and supervise it, while also assessing its efficacy and making the corresponding adjustments, in particular to ensure that the legal consequences of reconciliation envisaged in the law do not conspire against it.

El Salvador has made major strides on legal protection in relation to violence against women, including regulations and legislation to prevent and punish domestic violence. These include: the Domestic Violence Act, the Manual for Implementation of the Domestic Violence Act, the Penal Code, a National Policy on Women and the National Plan to Prevent and Deal with Domestic Violence (ISDEMU is the lead agency for the two latter institutions).

In this framework, ISDEMU, as lead agency, coordinates and monitors women's access to justice, as well as overseeing constant adaptation of the legal and practical procedures needed to uphold their rights. This process is carried out through the Inter-Institutional Judicial Commission, which consists of legal representatives from the Supreme Court, the National Judiciary Council, the Office of the Attorney General of the Republic, Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Family Courts, the Ministry of the Interior, the Technical Secretariat of the Office of the President of the Republic, the National Secretariat for the Family, institutions responsible for reviewing and proposing reforms to national legislation, with a gender perspective, to eliminate discrimination against women and uphold the principle of equality before the law for men and women at all levels of the judicial system.

Moreover, constant and continuous reviews are made of legislation which, under a gender and non-discriminatory analysis, will promote the formulation, approval and implementation of laws guaranteeing respect for women's fundamental freedoms and human rights, in fulfilment of national and international commitments.

The amendment or repeal of laws and regulations for the purpose of changing legal or traditional practices that sustain the persistence or tolerance of violence against women, include reformulating the concept of domestic violence as a crime within the Penal Code.

In the Penal Code, the sanction established for an abuser who threatens or endangers the life of a woman, either by physical attack or by damaging her property, is established as follows, for crimes of:

Domestic violence. Article 200. - Any person understood as a family relative, according to the scope of the Domestic Violence Act, who perpetrates acts of violence in any form indicated in Article 3 of that Act, shall liable to a prison term of between one and three years.

To bring a criminal action, it will be necessary to complete the legal procedure established in the aforementioned law.

Sexual harassment. Article 165.- Any person who performs a sexual act that is undesired by the recipient, involving words, touching, signs or other conduct of an unequivocally sexual nature or content, which does not in itself constitute a more serious crime, shall be sanctioned with a prison term of between three and five years.

Sexual harassment against a person under 15 years of age shall be sanctioned with a prison term of between four and eight years.

If the sexual harassment is performed by taking advantage of a position of superiority arising from any relationship with the victim, a fine of 100 - 200 days shall also be imposed.

Miscellaneous sexual acts. Article 166.- Anyone who, by deception, performs any sexual act involving bodily penetration with a person older than 15 years of age and younger than 18 shall be liable to a prison term of between four and eight years.

Any sexual act performed with a person under 16 years of age, even if with their consent, shall be subject to a prison term of between eight and 12 years.

Corruption of minors. Article 167.- Any person who promotes or facilitates the corruption of a person under 18 years of age, or of a person suffering from mental deficiency, through miscellaneous sexual acts involving bodily penetration, even if the victim consented to participation in such acts, shall be subject to a prison term of between six and 12 years.

Any person, whether a family relative or other private individual, who facilitates the acts described in the foregoing paragraph, shall be subject to the maximum penalty increased by one third.

Aggravated corruption. Article 168.- The penalty shall be 14 years' imprisonment if the corruption of minors involves:

(1) A victim under 15 years of age;

(2) The use of deception, violence, abuse of authority or trust, or any other means of intimidation;

(3) The use of deception, violence, abuse of authority or trust, or any other means of intimidation; and;

(4) An ancestor, foster parent, brother, or person responsible for the supervision, care or guardianship of the victim or children of the spouse or cohabitant.

Inducement, promotion and facilitation of sexual or erotic acts. Article 169.- Anyone who promotes, facilitates, administers, finances, instigates or in any way organizes the use of persons under 18 years of age in sexual or erotic acts, either individually or on an organized basis, whether publicly or privately, shall be subject to a prison term of between three and eight years.

Equal liability shall apply to anyone with causal knowledge who authorizes the use of, or rents, a property for the purpose of performing any of the activities described in the foregoing paragraph.

Remuneration for sexual or erotic acts. Article 169-A.- Anyone who pays or promises to remunerate with money or an advantage of any kind to a person under 18 years of age, or a third person for whom the underage person performs sexual or erotic acts, shall be subject to a prison term of between three and eight years.

Encouragement of prostitution. Article 170.- Anyone who compels another person, through coercion or by abusing a situation of need, to engage or continue to engage in prostitution shall be subject to six to 10 years' imprisonment.

The corresponding prison term shall range from eight to 12 years when the victim is under 18 years of age.

If the perpetrator in either case takes advantage of a position of superiority arising from any type of relationship with the victim, the prison term shall be increased by up to one third of the upper limit.

Supply and demand for third-party prostitution. Article 170-A.- The mere supply or offer of third-party prostitution services shall be liable to a prison term of between four and eight years.

The mere demand or request for prostitution services shall be sanctioned with the same penalty as above.

Indecent exposure. Article 171.- Anyone who performs or makes others perform lewd acts, or acts of obscene exposure, either in a public place or in public view, or in the presence of persons under 18 years of age or those suffering from mental disabilities, shall be liable to a prison term of between two and four years.

Pornography. Article 172.- Anyone who directly, including through electronic media, fabricates, transfers, disseminates, distributes, rents, sells, offers, produces, executes, exhibits, or shows films, magazines, booklets, or any other pornographic material among persons under 18 years of age, or those suffering from mental disability, shall be subject to a prison term of between three and five years.

The same sanction shall be applicable to anyone who does not visibly warn of the content of the films, magazines, booklets, or any other material, including material that can be transmitted through electronic media, when the content is unsuitable for persons under 18 years of age or those suffering from mental disability.

Use in pornography of persons under 18 years of age and those suffering from mental disabilities. Article 173.- Any person who produces, reproduces, distributes, publishes, imports, exports, offers, finances, sells, markets, or disseminates images

in any form, or uses the voice of a person under 18 years of age or a person suffering from mental disability, whether directly, through information, audiovisual or virtual technology or any other form of media in which they are exhibited in sexual or erotic activities, or activities that are of an unequivocally sexual nature, explicit or otherwise, whether real or simulated, shall be subject to six to 12 years' imprisonment.

The same sanction shall be applicable to anyone who organizes or participates in public or private shows, in which the persons mentioned in the foregoing paragraph are forced to participate in pornographic or erotic actions.

Possession of pornography. Article 173-A.- Anyone who possesses pornographic material that makes use of the image of persons under 18 years of age, or persons suffering from mental disability, in pornographic or erotic activities, shall be subject to between two and four years' imprisonment.

Article 173-(b).- The crimes referred to in articles 169 at 173 of this Code shall be subject to the maximum corresponding penalty increased by up to one third, and disqualification from practising their profession for the duration of the sentence, if any of the actions described were perpetrated by:

a. Ancestors, descendants, brothers, foster parents, adoptees, spouses, cohabitants, and family relatives up to the fourth degree of consanguinity and second degree of kinship;

b. All persons considered in article 39 of this Code;

c. Anyone responsible for the guardianship, protection or supervision of the victim; and,

d. Any person taking advantage of a position of superiority arising from relationships of trust, domestic situation, education, work or any other type of relationship.

Human commerce. Article 367.- Anyone who, either alone or as a member of an international organization, engages in human commerce for any purpose, shall be subject to between four and eight years' imprisonment.

If the commerce involves Salvadoran women or children, the penalty may be increased by up to one third of the maximum indicated.

Illegal human trafficking. Article 367-A.- Anyone who, on their own account or on behalf of another or others, illegally brings or attempts to bring foreigners into national territory, or provides them with transport or guidance, with the aim of evading the country's migration controls or those of other countries, shall be subject to between four and eight years' imprisonment.

The same penalty shall be applicable to any one who gives shelter, transport or guidance to Salvadoran nationals for the purpose of evading the country's migration controls or those of other countries.

The same sanction shall also be applicable to any individual who, using false or fraudulent documentation, extracts or tries to extract from the country Salvadoran citizens or persons of another nationality; or persons using authentic documentation that belongs to another person.

If, as a consequence of the perpetration of this crime, the victims suffer deprivation of liberty abroad, are victims of crimes of any type or die of violent causes, or causes of a culpable nature, the penalty shall be increased by two thirds.

Human trafficking. Article 367-B.- Anyone who, on their own behalf or as a member of a national or international organization, for the purpose of obtaining an economic benefit, recruits, transports, transfers, shelters or receives individuals, inside or outside national territory, for the purpose of executing an activity involving sexual exploitation, maintains them in a state of forced labour or servitude, in practices similar to slavery, or for the extraction of organs, fraudulent adoptions or forced marriages, shall be subject to between four and eight years' imprisonment.

Anyone who facilitates, promotes or favours any of the foregoing activities shall be subject to between three and six years' imprisonment.

When the actions described are performed on commercial premises or premises of any type that require a permit from the competent authority, the latter shall revoke the permit and immediately close down the enterprise in question.

Aggravating factors in the crime of human trafficking. Article 367-(c).- The crime referred to in article 367-B of this Code shall be subject to the maximum corresponding penalty increased by up to one third, and disqualification from practising the profession for the duration of the sentence, in the following cases:

1. If perpetrated by public and municipal officials, employees, public authority, agent of authority and National Civil Police officers.
2. When the victim is under 18 years of age or without legal capacity.
3. If perpetrated by persons taking advantage of a position of superiority arising from relations of trust, or a domestic, educational, work or any other relationship.
4. If, as a consequence of the perpetration of the foregoing crime, the victims suffer deprivation of liberty abroad, are victims of crimes of any type, or die for culpable reasons.

The Penal Code sanctions sexual violence within marriage.

Article 200 of the Penal Code establishes the following:

Domestic violence

Article 200.- Any person understood as a family relative, pursuant to the scope of the Domestic Violence Act, who exercises violence in any of the forms indicated in article 3 of that Act, shall be subject to between one and three years' imprisonment.

To bring the criminal action, it will be necessary to exhaust the legal procedure described in the aforementioned Act.

Within this legal framework, the items related to article 3 of the Domestic Violence Act are complemented by the concepts and forms of domestic violence established in this article.

Concepts and forms of domestic violence

Article 3.- Domestic violence is defined as any act or omission, whether direct or indirect, that causes injury; physical, sexual or psychological suffering; or death to family members.

The following are forms of domestic violence:

a. Psychological violence: Act or omission, whether direct or indirect, whose purpose is to control or degrade the actions, behaviour, beliefs and decisions of other persons, through intimidation, manipulation, direct or indirect threat, humiliation, isolation or any other conduct or omission that causes injury in terms of psychological health, self-determination, comprehensive development and personal possibilities;

b. Physical violence: Actions, behaviour or omissions that threaten or injure a person's physical integrity;

c. Sexual violence: actions that compel a person to have physical or verbal sexualized contacts, or to participate in such contacts by force, intimidation, coercion, blackmail, bribery, manipulation, threat or other means that prevent or restrict free will. Sexual violence also includes cases where the abuser compels the victim to engage in any of these acts with third parties..

d. Property violence: Act or omission perpetrated by someone, which affects or prevents due care for the needs of the family or any of the persons referred to in this Act; or damages, loses, diminishes, destroys, retains, distracts or appropriates objects, instruments or goods.

In addition, the current rules on indemnification for women victims of violence are included as in article 174 of the Penal Code.

Special indemnifications

Article 174.- The perpetrators of the crimes referred to in chapters I and II of this Title shall also be sentenced via indemnification:

1. To pay all expenses incurred by the victim in respect of medical, psychiatric or psychological care; and,

2. To provide the victim with full maintenance throughout the period of medical incapacity.

In addition, criminal law provides generic sanctions for any refusal by public officials to enforce this law, as described below:

Infringements of the right to equality. Article 292.- Any public official, employee or agent of any authority or public authority who, on grounds of nationality, race, sex, religion or any other attribute of an individual, denies that person any of the individual rights recognized under the Constitution, shall be liable to from one to three years' imprisonment and shall be disqualified from fulfilling their functions or holding their post during that time.

Failure to investigate. Article 311.- The Prosecutor General of the Republic, or an official appointed by him/her, who, excluding the cases permitted by law, refuses to

investigate a crime of which he/she has been notified in the normal course of his/her functions shall be liable to between three and five years' imprisonment.

The same sanction shall be applicable to officials who, being aware of the perpetration of a crime, fail to bring the corresponding criminal actions before the judge or competent court.

In addition, in all such cases, special disqualification from the post shall apply for the same time.

Failure to notify. Article 312.- Any public official, employee or agent of any authority, or public authority who, in the exercise of their functions or on occasion thereof, gains knowledge of the perpetration of a punishable act, and fails to report this within 24 hours to the competent official, shall be liable to a fine of between 50 and 100 days.

The same sanction shall be applicable to the chief officer or person responsible for a hospital, clinic or other similar public or private establishment, who fails to notify the competent official of the admission of injured persons, within eight hours following admission, in cases that should rationally be considered to have been caused by a crime.

Disobedience in the case of domestic violence. Article 338.-A.- Any person disobeying a preventive order or measure, or a protection order issued by the public authority in application of the Domestic Violence Act shall be subject to one to three years' imprisonment.

The Domestic Violence Act includes:

Obligation to notify the competent officials

Article 14.- The following persons shall be required to report acts constituting domestic violence:

a. Officials who become cognizant thereof as a result of their functions; and,

b. Doctors, pharmacists, nurses, teachers and other persons who practise professions relating to health, education and social welfare, upon becoming aware of such acts as a result of providing their professional services.

Article 28. At the same hearing, based on the testimony of those appearing as witnesses, provided the actions in question do not require proof, and on the basis of commitments assumed by the defendant and accepted by the victim, the judge, shall decide:

a. To presume as established the actions denounced as constituting domestic violence.

b. Attribute violence to the person or persons generating it;

c. Require the abuser to comply with the commitment made by that person during the hearing.

d. Decree preventive, precautionary or protection measures, as necessary, if previously agreed upon;

e. Require the abuser to reimburse the victim for the damage caused by the violent conduct, such as health services, the cost of medicines, and the value of goods and other expenses arising from the violence perpetrated;

f. Require the abuser to undergo psychological or psychiatric treatment or to attend self-help groups specializing in domestic violence, to undergo therapy on domestic violence, using the various programmes provided by family protection institutions. This measure may also be applied from the start of the procedure and in all cases it will be monitored.

In the same ruling the abuser shall be warned of the criminal sanctions arising in the event of non-compliance or a repetition of the acts of domestic violence.

> The Committee is concerned at the lack of necessary sexual education programmes and diffusion thereof, and the effect this has on the high rate of teenage pregnancy, particularly in rural areas, and increased infection by sexually communicated diseases and HIV/AIDS. The Committee is also concerned at the obstacles faced by women in gaining access to adequate health services, including those aimed at preventing cancer.

Sex education is a major concern for the Salvadoran State, and national prevention and care programmes have been developed with inter-institutional coordination. The Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance (MSPAS), in coordination with the Ministry of Education, is executing a programme entitled "Education for Life", which aims to "contribute to the formation of children, adolescents and young people, enabling them to develop high self-esteem, learn to channel their emotions and sexuality, and have a defined life project." In the execution of this programme, a number of actions have been undertaken including: training for young people (who then spread their knowledge among other young people) in the prevention of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), prevention of teenage pregnancy, gender violence, and the development of "life projects". Educational materials for comprehensive sex education have also been designed and disseminated, and training has been provided to teachers and students.

In El Salvador, 80 per cent of health services for the population at large are provided by the Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance (MSPAS). The Salvadoran Social Security Institute (ISSS) covers 15 per cent, the teachers' social security system covers 2 per cent, and another 3 per cent are attended by the private sector.

The Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance pursues two main aims through the HIV/AIDS programme:

1. Reduce the incidence and transmission of STD/HIV/AIDS, and

2. Reduce their social impact.

This programme includes four components: prevention; assistance services; institutional development; and epidemiological surveillance and evaluation. MPSAS has 120 health service centres, including health units in hospitals that perform the ELISA test for HIV on a cost-free basis for pregnant women and/or at-risk patients. It has been providing the ELISA test free of charge to pregnant women since 2004; and if the mother proves positive, she is offered antiretroviral treatment to reduce

the risk of her child being born with HIV, which to date has succeeded in keeping rates of vertical transmission of the virus low.[10]

This method has helped reduce the number of children infected through vertical HIV transmission: in 2003 the Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance recorded 160 children who became infected through this route, but in 2004 there were 20 children infected and in 2005 six new cases per day were reduced to four or five. The number of cases detected per day in 2003 was four, in 2004 it was six, and up to June 2005, 4.2 per day.

Main strategies implemented by the Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance in 2003-2005, in relation to sex education and services for women in urban and rural areas.

- Creation of the Contraceptive Logistics Committee and distribution of contraceptives nationwide.
- National Committee to Monitor Maternal and Perinatal Mortality
- Preparation of a continuous education manual for midwives
- Campaign for the implementation of family planning standards
- Programme to strengthen knowledge on sexual and reproductive health for personnel throughout the national health network and the Basic Comprehensive Health System (SIBASI)
- Implementation of the model to reduce maternal and perinatal mortality in Sonsonate.
- Implementation of the perinatal training system in 28 maternity centres of the Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance
- Inter-Institutional Committee for the Prevention of Cervical-Uterine Cancer
- Training programme on issues of masculinity, gender and domestic violence for medical and administrative personnel.
- Preparation of national standards for prenatal, delivery and postpartum care.
- Training for health personnel on gender and health issues.
- Increase in the rate of use of family planning methods to 67 per cent. The family planning methods that are promoted in the various health services are oral contraceptives, injectables (which are the most widely used), intrauterine device (IUD) and sterilization.
- Development of the project entitled "Prevention of cervical-uterine cancer among low-income women from rural areas", involving participation by nurses, doctors from the first and second care levels, and health promoters from the basic comprehensive health system (SIBASI) in the departments of La Paz, Morazán and Cuscatlán. The aim is to reduce the incidence of, and mortality from, cervical cancer through prevention and timely detection and treatment.

[10] Vertical transmission of the virus is defined as transmission from mother to child during pregnancy or delivery.

- Implementation of the project entitled "Screening alternatives[11] for the prevention of cervical-uterine cancer", with participation by doctors, nurses and health promoters from SIBASI in Chalatenango and Nueva Concepción.
- Implementation of the project entitled "Model for communication and implementation of intentions for the prevention of cervical-uterine cancer", with participation by doctors, nurses and health promoters from SIBASI in Sensuntepeque and Ilobasco.
- Local workshops to raise awareness for effective community distribution of contraceptives.
- Implementation of the computerized system to register the use and distribution of contraceptives nationwide.
- Nationwide implementation of the perinatal computer system in 27 maternity units across the country, with support from the "Dr. Raúl Arguello Escolán" National Maternity Hospital and the "Benjamín Bloom" National Children's Hospital, as institutions related to the Latin American Perinatal Centre (CLAP).
- Preparation of the inter-institutional and inter-agency plan to reduce maternal and perinatal mortality 2004-2009. This includes all health establishments in the public, private and non-governmental sector which provide prenatal checkup and childbirth and postpartum services.
- Launch and dissemination of the National Plan to Reduce Maternal Mortality.
- Preparation of manuals and educational materials to support the promotion of prenatal checkups, institutional childbirth and family planning.
- Technical assistance, by consultants from the Latin American Perinatal Centre of Uruguay (CLAP), in the use and administration of the perinatal computer system and development of research protocols in evidence-based medicine that improve maternal and perinatal care services with paediatricians and gynaecologists from the 28 maternity units located across the country.
- Preparation of regulatory documents to support obstetric care such as: Guidelines for care in cases of obstetric disease at the third and second care levels, guidelines for surveillance of maternal and perinatal mortality, user manuals for the perinatal computer system.
- Training activities for dealing with the main obstetric complications for doctors and nurses from the 28 maternity units.
- Distribution of equipment and material to support obstetric care in hospitals and seven health units.
- Assistance from the Atlanta Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), to support research for the maternal mortality baseline.
- Coordination with the El Salvador Municipalities Corporation (COMURES) and the Directorate General of Statistics and Censuses (DYGESTIC) in preparing vital statistics.

[11] Screening: a test to examine something painstakingly.

- Preparation of posters and triptychs for distribution to municipalities and health sector establishments to support research for the maternal mortality baseline.
- Preparation of a research protocol, instruments and manuals to support the maternal mortality baseline nationwide.
- Start of the nationwide data collection stage in support of the research.
- Training for 160 nurses in the eastern zone of the country to support obstetric and newborn care.
- Preparation of the joint statement by the Gynaecological Society of El Salvador (ASOGOES), the Nursing Association (ANES), the Paediatric Society and the Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance to support actions to be undertaken in the maternal mortality reduction plan.
- Hiring of non-governmental organizations to extend maternal and perinatal care in high-risk areas in rural zones of the departments of Chalatenango, Ahuachapán, Cabañas and Morazán.
- Targeting on the municipalities of Perquín, Department of Morazán, Izalco, Department of Sonsonate, and Chalatenango, Department of Chalatenango, to promote the "Strategy for the Empowerment of Women, Family and Community" (MFC).
- Development of the regional training programme for service providers in Paraguay, Honduras and Bolivia in the "Strategy for the Empowerment of Women, Family and Community " (MFC).
- Preparation of the National Strategic Plan to Reduce Mortality from Cervical-Uterine Cancer and its respective financial costing.
- Implementation of an expert panel on external quality control in cytology reading the national level.
- Provision of colposcopy equipment to improve the quality of biopsy examinations of the cervix, criotherapy and leep cone, in the municipal hospitals of Morazán, La Paz, San Rafael and Cojutepeque.
- Updating by a health sector consultative committee on standards for the prevention and treatment of cervical-uterine cancer.
- Printing of educational material to support standards for the prevention and control of cervical uterine cancer.
- Publication of the manual for the new health care model in rural health and nutrition centres.
- Official introduction of the initiative entitled "Friendly Health Care Units for Children and Mothers".
- Formation of a team of facilitators from the advisory course on maternal breast-feeding at the Ministry of Health and Social Security and the Salvadoran Social Security Institute.
- Advisory training events on breast-feeding for facilitators and councillors.
- Support for the system of Monitoring of Direct Support for Breast-Feeding in 27 hospitals with maternity services (MADLAC).

- Surveillance and oversight of the Food Fortification Programme, through the Quality Guarantee System that includes salt and iodine sugar with vitamin A and wheat and maize flour with iron, folic acid and other vitamins in the vitamin B complex.

Use of cervical uterine cytology

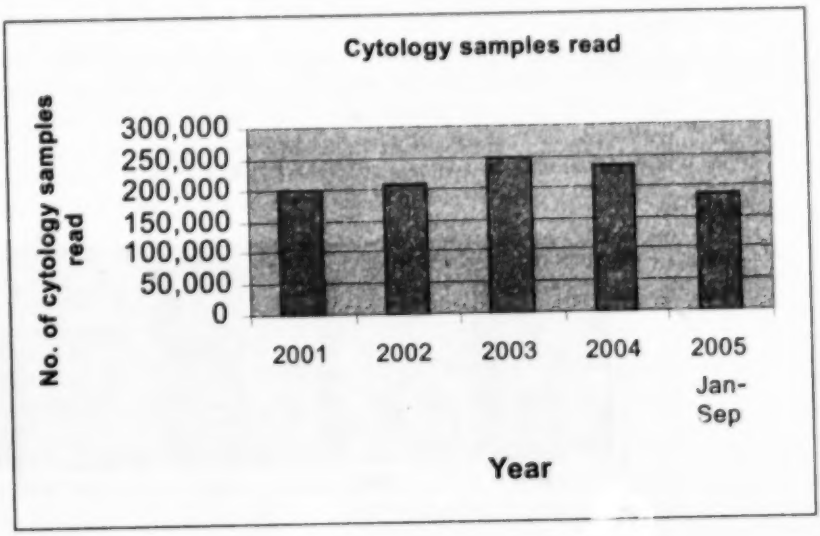
Cervical-uterine cancer is a major cause of female mortality in El Salvador, according to data from the Tumour Registry of the Cancer Institute. In 2002, through the programme for the prevention and control of uterine cancer, the Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance officially released the "Technical Regulation" and respective programme, retargeting actions on the most vulnerable groups. The starting point is prevention of this disease, by taking cytology samples.

According to MSPAS data, 208,408 cytology (cervical-uterine) samples were read in 2002, and 249,629 in 2003, i.e. a 20 per cent increase in coverage. For 2004 the figure was 235,689, and up to September 2005, 186,094.

The proportion of (cervical uterine) cytologies read showing invasive cancer was 0.28 per cent of the total for 2002 and 0.49 per cent for 2003.

Figure 4

Year	Cytology samples read
2001	198,643
2002	208,408
2003	249,629
2004	235,689
Jan-Sep 2005	186, 094



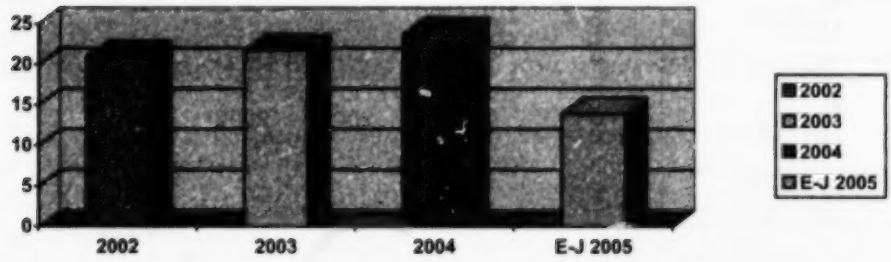
The Salvadoran Social Security Institute (ISSS) operates the Comprehensive Health Care for Women Programme

The components of this programme include the provision of quality maternity care to the patient during pregnancy, childbirth and postpartum, using a risk approach, aimed at keeping the mother and child in optimal physical and mental health, and promoting maternal breast feeding and family planning.

Table 1

Main indicators	2002	2003	2004	January-July 2005
Patients registered	20,920	21,781	23,798	13,909
Early registration index	58%	58%	61.4%	62.6%
Postnatal checkup index	57%	52%	56%	49%
Deliveries attended	109%	97%	94%	79%

Figure 5



The number of patients registered has increased each year.

The progress achieved through implementation of the Women's Care Programme has increased the coverage of cytology sampling for the prevention of uterine and breast cancer, through promotion and visits to firms; it has increased the number of women providing cervical vaginal cytology samples for the first time in their lives; and it has also led to increased mammography screening, through direct contact with communities, monitoring in health care centres that have low coverage, and follow-up visits to verify fulfilment of the standard.

Health care for women in menopause

This programme began in May 2004 with the aim of providing care for women in the peri- and post-menopausal period, through actions that ensure the promotion, development and early detection of chronic diseases, thus promoting timely management of the characteristic symptoms at this stage of life, as well as providing services for early detection of osteoporosis. Up to July 2005, 116,547 patients had been attended between 40 and 60 years of age.

> The Committee recommends that the State party take steps to guarantee and expand access to health services, paying special attention to the implementation of dissemination and awareness-raising programmes and policies on sex education, particularly among adolescents. These should cover issues relating to contraceptive methods and their availability in society at large, bearing in mind that family planning is the responsibility of both partners, and placing special emphasis on preventing and combating STDs and HIV/AIDS.

With the aim of improving the health system, expanding coverage and improving care quality, the Salvadoran Government has created the Health Solidarity Fund (FOSALUD), to provide medical care to populations living in places that cannot be reached by road, or for people who have difficulties accessing health units. The units created will provide a 24/7 service, thereby facilitating access for women.

The Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance, acting through the HIV/AIDS programme, and in coordination with the Ministry of Education, has made HIV/AIDS prevention part of the formal study programme for 2004-2005. This programme covered 50 per cent of primary schools and 50 per cent of secondary schools in the public sector. Training was provided for teachers on this issue, with didactic material adapted to the age group of the students in question.

Prevention campaigns have been implemented, the main features of which are abstinence, fidelity, and delaying the start of sexual relations. This is supported by the distribution of condoms in key areas such as discotheques, bars or parks, in coordination with non-governmental organizations.

Cultural pressure is one of the obstacles faced by women in deciding to undergo cytological examinations, or to practise family planning, and when to have sexual relations. Accordingly, ISEDMU, in fulfilment of the National Policy on Women in the health area is promoting women's access to dissemination, orientation and training programmes on sexual and reproductive health; and it is implementing a training programme entitled "Education for Sexuality" targeting students and the population at large nationwide.

> The Committee is concerned by the high level of poverty among women, particularly among rural and indigenous women.

Unlike other Latin American countries, the cultural identity of the indigenous peoples of El Salvador is not immediately apparent, since they do not have the cultural traits, such as language and traditional dress, whereby an indigenous person from other areas is identified.

Public policies are targeted on the general population, which includes indigenous communities.

Indigenous peoples are also represented on the Multisectoral Technical Committee (CTMPI), set up in 2001. It brings together the Ministry of Health and Welfare, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of the Environment, the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, and the indigenous peoples, and is chaired by the National Council for Culture and the Arts (CONCULTURA). It aims to take a global approach to the sociocultural problems of the indigenous peoples. In 2005 it is intended to revitalize the Committee, which has served to pool the resources of the Government, the indigenous peoples and international cooperation agencies.

This Committee's first task was the compilation of the Indigenous Profile of El Salvador, with the support of the World Bank; it was completed in 2001. In 2000, reflecting increased awareness of the situation of indigenous peoples in El Salvador, an agreement to conduct the study was signed by the Ministry of Education, the National Council for Culture and the Arts, the World Bank and the Technical Assistance Unit RUTA of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock. The study was carried out on a participatory basis with a view to producing a preliminary study on indigenous peoples in the country.

In 2002, the National Council for Culture and the Arts also started working with indigenous women, and from 27 to 30 June 2002 the First Encounter of Indigenous Women was held in El Refugio, La Palma and Chalatenango with 150 participants. Its objectives were to visualize the role of aid in national development and to encourage an exchange of experience among women indigenous leaders nationwide. What is being proposed for the future is to seek ways of building on those experiences through local projects proposed by the leaders themselves.

In summary, the Indigenous Affairs Unit has worked in various areas with a view to raising awareness and opening up new forums for working with indigenous peoples in El Salvador.

In this regard, the Salvadoran State is also concerned by the poverty level endured by people living in rural areas, for which reason the current Government, acting through the Technical Secretariat of the Office of the President and the Social Investment Fund for Local Development (FISDL) is implementing the Solidarity Network Programme, which was developed with a gender perspective (without discriminating against women on the basis of ethnic origin). Its primary goal is to comprehensively improve living conditions among rural families living in extreme poverty, broadening their opportunities by providing basic social services and access to productive development services and microcredit, thereby enabling them to make the most of their capacities to exploit these opportunities and improve their personal, family and community lives.

As a contribution to this programme, in the period from June 2004 to date the National Secretariat for the Family has provided food support to over 30,000 families through the Extended Relief and Rehabilitation Programme, which aims to improve the nutritional status of children, pregnant women and breast-feeding mothers living in situations of poverty and food insecurity. Health establishments have also been strengthened nationally, supported with equipment, medications, technical assistance and food. In addition, over 10,000 wheelchairs have been delivered to persons with disabilities during this period.

Assistance was provided to open a credit line for women microentrepreneurs, specially targeting women heads of household, through the Family Solidarity Fund (FOSOFAMILIA).

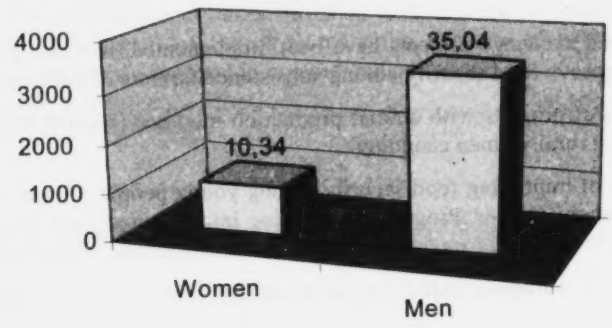
In this context, the Ministry of Agriculture assumed the fundamental mission of generating conditions to facilitate and invigorate sustainable and equitable development for women and men in agricultural, forestry and fishing activities.

With the implementation the agriculture, livestock, aquaculture, fishery and food area of the National Policy on Women, the Agriculture Ministry (MAG) has taken steps to eliminate discrimination against rural women, strengthen their capacities and help reduce their poverty levels. This involves a strategic process to improve the conditions and quality of life for male and female farmers, livestock breeders, forestry and fishery producers, and to make equal opportunities between women and men a reality. These actions have contributed to fulfilment of the objectives and actions of the National Policy on Women.

Within this framework, technical assistance and specialized attention has been provided to 10,343 female and 35,048 male producers (45,391 people in all) through the 27 extension agencies of the National Centre for Agricultural Technology (CENTA)[12] along with the PRODERNOR, PRODAP II, PRODERT, PAES and PREMODER projects[13] covering the 14 of the country's departments; and the objectives and actions of the PNM have been incorporated into its work plans.

Figure 6

Men and women producers who have received specialized services and technical assistance

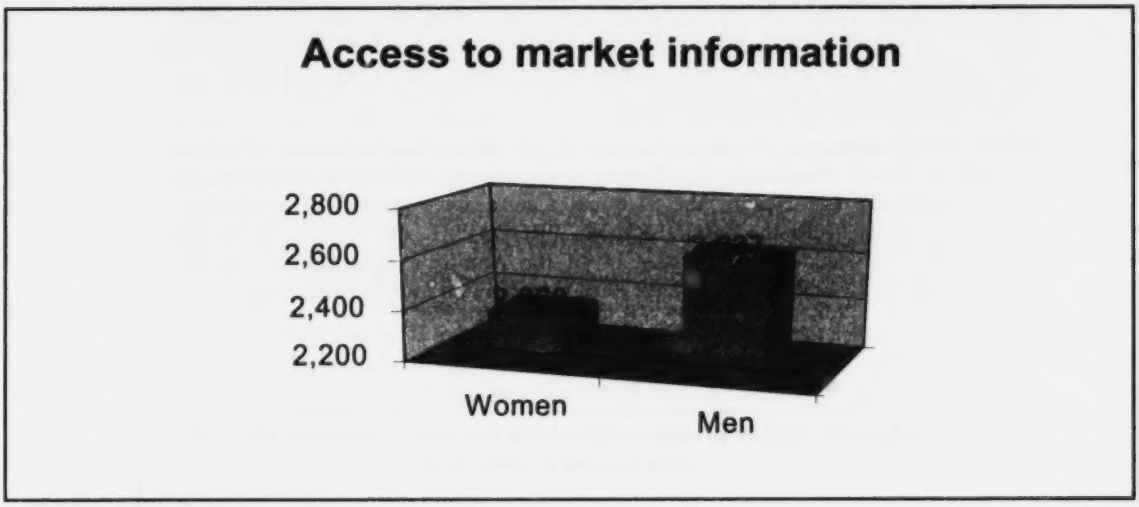


[12] CENTA, National Centre for Agricultural Technology.

[13] Rural Development Project for the Populations of the North East of El Salvador (PRODERNOR), Agriculture Development Project for Small Producers in the Central Region, (PRODAP II), Sustainable Rural Development Project for Ecologically Fragile Zones in the Trifinio Region (PRODERT), Environmental Programme of El Salvador (PAES), Programme of Reconstruction and Rural Modernization (PREMODER).

Actions have been undertaken to help[14] promote women's access to commercial information systems, along with strategies and actions that stimulate formal and informal organization among women producers, or in mixed form, on the basis of their interests and demands, to facilitate access to agriculture and forestry and fishery assistance technical services, credit, marketing and markets. Activities have included the holding of female producer fairs, and the preparation of market strategies to incorporate the demand from female and male producers for guidance in the creation of businesses, brands and marketing, to develop ethnic markets.

Figure 7



Enhanced seed exchange projects have been implemented, in basic grains, thereby helping to improve food security among subsistence farmers of both sexes.

Development of projects with animal production modules (poultry, pigs and goats) to improve the rural women economy.

With the aim of improving food security among young people of both sexes in rural zones, the School Garden Programme is being implemented by CENTA extension agencies in 25 schools across the country.

Development of a training and technical assistance programme for young people in rural zones.

Implementation of a programme to support rural women, involving home visits to strengthen their productive and organizational capacities.

A number of projects have been implemented to rebuild infrastructure damaged by earthquakes in rural areas; these have elicited wide-ranging participation by women.

[14] These actions correspond to Strategic Objective 8.2 of the Agriculture, Livestock, Fishery, Aquaculture and Food Area of the National Policy on Women.

Design and implementation of the programme to generate and transfer technology for the production of basic grains, fruit and natural resources, benefiting both women and men.

> The Committee urges the State party to develop a poverty eradication strategy that gives priority attention to rural and indigenous women by allocating budgetary funding; and to take adequate measures to ascertain their situation with a view to formulating specific policies and programmes that will be effective in improving their socioeconomic situation, and ensure they receive the services and support that they need.

The Ministry of Agriculture (MAG) has incorporated the gender perspective in "Policy Actions for Agriculture and Agribusiness Development 2004-2009, Centred on the Employment Pact", and also in the "Rural Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy."

The Solidarity Fund for the Microenterprise Family (FOSOFAMILIA) was created by Decree No. 627 in 1999, with the aim of extending credit under market conditions to microenterprises in the commerce, industry, agriculture and craft sectors, and to all productive activity nationally, preferably serving the needs of Salvadoran women heads of family, irrespective of ethnic origin.

With the aim of expanding the coverage of productive loans, an agreement has been signed with ISDEMU to set up coordination mechanisms to generate opportunities for women heads of household, who are users of the Programme to Improve Family Relations, with the aim of contributing to their comprehensive development and improving their situation. The methodology used is personalized, with group activities in places where there is demand based on the creation of solidarity groups (minimum of two people), from microenterprises engaged in subsistence activities without credit from other institutions.

With a mission to support women's productive development by granting loans, a number of activities were undertaken in 2004 with a view to maximizing user benefits. Thus, 75 per cent of the client portfolio consists of women heads of household, who are mostly engaged in commercial activities.

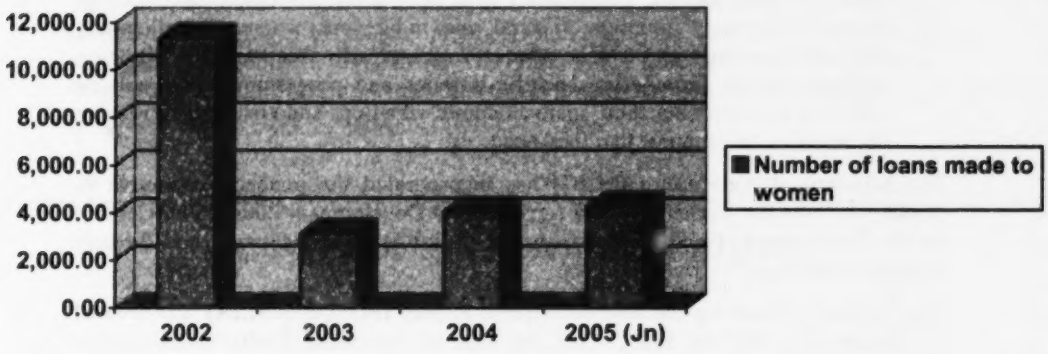
Loans granted to women in 2002-2005 have been distributed as follows:

Table 2

Years	2002	2003	2004	2005 (June)
Number of loans granted to women	11,339.2 (80%)	3,106.00 (75%)	4,027.00 (77%)	4,251.00 (80% approx.)
Average amount US$	$247.00	$405.00	$402.00	$450.00

Figure 8

Loans granted to women



Indigenous population in El Salvador

These Salvadoran State recognizes this population through institutions such as CONCULTURA and ISDEMU, as the lead agency of the National Policy on Women. The latter includes actions specially designed to contribute to the advancement of indigenous women in its plan of action.

Indigenous peoples identified by the Salvadoran State through CONCULTURA[15] are: the **Nahua-pipiles**, who live in the departments of Ahuachapán, Santa Ana, Sonsonate, La Libertad, San Salvador, Cuscatlán, La Paz, Chalatenango and San Vicente; and the **Lencas** who live in the departments of Usulután, San Miguel, Morazán and La Unión. These groups account for 10 per cent of the Salvadoran population.

Women of indigenous origin:

With the aim of developing programmes that match their needs, diagnostic studies have been performed that have targeted projects to help improve the situation of this population group. In this framework, comprehensive attention is given to indigenous women from the municipalities of Nahuizalco, Santo Domingo de Guzmán, San Julián of the Department of Sonsonate, and the municipality of Guatajiagua, in the Department of Morazán. Indigenous women in these areas are receiving support for productive engagement through the formation of women craft worker associations and cooperatives; training on environment, gender, citizen participation, literacy circles; and the development of entrepreneurial skills, which include management, marketing, customer service, costs, sales, etc.

In other municipalities such as Tacuba, in the Department of Ahuachapán, training is being provided in the preparation of natural medicine and medicinal plant nurseries, reflecting a need among this population group to restore traditional values in the medical field.

[15] Profile of the indigenous peoples of El Salvador Pueblos Indígenas, World Bank, RUTA and CONCULTURA. 2003.

Women's productive engagement is coordinated with specialist institutions such as the Salvadoran Cooperative Development Institute (INSAFOCOOP), which have undertaken the following actions in 2002-2004.

- A total of 122 cooperatives were set up with a gender focus in the country's 14 departments.
- A total of 135 basic courses on gender equity were implemented nationwide.
- A total of 4,600 women benefited from basic courses in cooperativism nationwide.
- Female participation in cooperativism has risen to an average of 43 per cent in the period under study.
- Women have held an average of 34 per cent of jobs in the cooperative sector.
- Women's share of management posts in cooperative associations has increased to 44 per cent.
- Awareness-raising workshops have been held for employees of the institution, nationwide, to enable them to serve as propagators of the gender perspective, within the cooperative associations.

Although the overall illiteracy rate has fallen, the Committee is concerned by the persistence of the problem, especially in rural zones, and by the high female school dropout rate, particularly in rural and indigenous areas.

The Ministry of Education, as the agency responsible for the country's education, and taking account of international commitments ratified by the Salvadoran State in relation to eliminating discrimination against women and ensuring equal rights with respect to men in education, is developing nationwide programmes, targeting the female population in rural areas. The literacy and basic education programme for adults of both sexes (Literacy Programme of El Salvador – PAEBA) is making major progress in facilitating access to education for adult women, which has made possible to steadily reduce the female illiteracy rate as shown in the following table:

Table 9

Trend of illiteracy among women

(10 years of age and older)

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
19.90%	18.80%	18.30%	18.40%	17.70%

Source: Multipurpose Household Survey, Ministry of Economic Affairs.

Although the illiteracy rate is still high, it is undeniable that significant progress has been made in efforts to raise the educational level of adult women, especially those living in the country's rural areas.

a. The same conditions for career and vocational guidance, access to studies and for obtaining diplomas in educational establishments of all categories, in rural as well as in urban areas; this equality should be guaranteed in pre-school, general, technical, professional and higher technical education, as well as in all types of vocational training;

- **Training programmes to apply the gender perspective** in education aimed at literacy teachers and promoters of adult literacy circles.
- **SAGE programme-El Salvador** executed by the Ministry of Education and the National Secretariat for the Family (both State organizations), in conjunction with private enterprise and communications media. This included awareness-raising campaigns on the issue for the Salvadoran population through the media: written press, radio, publicity posters and mobile advertisements on collective transport, videos, and awareness-raising workshops with adult and youth religious leaders. The main achievements of this campaign were to place the issue of girls' education as a point of interest on the national agenda and to involve the country's mass communications media in the task.
- **Vocational guidance programme with a gender perspective** in the third cycle of basic education, in which students are both sexes are given guidance to present options for choosing careers to study in the future.
- **Gender mainstreaming in the "Education for all Plan" of El Salvador,** Commitment of the Salvadoran State in the forum "Education for All" in Dakar, Senegal, 2000.

b. Access to study programmes and exams, teachers of the same professional level and **places, and also to school equipment of the same quality;**

- ❖ Learning Resource Centres (CRA) **which include equal access for young men and women in the use of computers and school libraries.**

c. The elimination of any stereotyping of the roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education, by encouraging coeducation and other types of education that will help achieve this aim; and, in particular, by revising textbooks and school programmes and adapting teaching methods.

- **Incorporation of the gender perspective in the curricula instruments of initial education**: Study programmes, educational materials, (methodology guides, work booklets, etc.), and a school guide for parents.
- Production of **"Equal opportunities" and "Coeducation"** modules for secondary technical education, addressing the following issues: education with equity, standards for coexistence and equity in schools, gender mainstreaming in curricula.

- **Incorporation of the gender perspective in educational texts at the nursery and primary levels.**
- **Project entitled "Gender equity in the classroom"** which seeks to improve pedagogic practices by providing instruments and resources that make it easier to visualize all types of discrimination, exclusion and marginalization that prevent full development of the human being. This project has developed resources and studies such as the baseline research "Gender equity in the classroom", educational tools and a video entitled "Gender equity in the classroom". All these materials of form part of the "Toolkit for gender equity in the classroom" distributed among 5,000 schools piloting the project.
- **Awareness raising among pedagogic advisers** in the diploma course **"Specialists in education for life"**, the aim of which was to empower pedagogic advisers in managing crosscutting activities to motivate teachers to change their attitudes and conduct, with a view to improving the teaching-learning process. The diploma included six modules: Gender equity in the classroom, Positive conflict management, Comprehensive sexuality education, Life project and social skills, Disaster prevention, Prevention of addictions.
- **Awareness-raising and training on the gender perspective and equal opportunities, aimed at pedagogic advisers whose functions include verifying the fulfilment of educational standards in the classroom;** technical teachers from National Technological Institutes in the central, western and eastern zones of the country, who have appointed "gender references" to ensure the incorporation of girls.
- **Diagnostic research** on "Sexism in Eight National Institutes of Educational Innovation in the APREMAT Project", with the aim of documenting the factors that lead children to abandon their secondary technical education studies, and solve this type of problem.
- **Research on the "Situation of boys' and girls' education"** which publishes the main education indicators (attendance, gross enrolment rates, attendance at school and work) of boy and girl students.
- Gender equity mainstreaming in images and audio in all audiovisual productions produced by the Ministry of Education Video Unit.

d. Equal opportunities to benefit from scholarships and other study grants.

- **Award of scholarships with a gender perspective:** Under the scholarship programme of the Office of the President of the Republic, the Ministry of Education awarded incentives and study scholarships to 50.5 per cent of women and 49.4 per cent men between 2000 and 2003. In 2004, it awarded 57 per cent to women and 42.7 per cent to men. The scholarships were awarded on criteria of academic excellence, gender, lack of economic resources, origin (rural zone or marginal urban area), among others.

e. Equal opportunities for access to continuing education programmes, including adult and functional literacy programmes, particularly those

aimed at reducing, at the earliest possible date, any gap in education existing between men and women.

- Creation of new education delivery modalities: **Accelerated education, Accelerated Bachillerato, Alternative classrooms, Tele-learning, New centres for distance education, Training and skill development for work in Literacy Circles, and Adult Basic Education (PAEBA). All of these programmes have a gender equality and equity focus. In addition, the National Education Plan 2021 (which includes education policies and implementation strategies for a 15-year period) includes a number of programmes and projects whose final goal is to achieve access to quality education on the basis of equal opportunities for women and men.**

f. Reduction of female student drop-out rates and the organization of programmes for girls and women who have left school early.

- The index of parity between the sexes (IPS) in primary and secondary education, measured by girls and boys net enrolment rates for 2004 is 0.95, i.e. a slight advantage for boys. At the rural level, the IPS is 0.91, so the situation is more unfavourable for girls. Meanwhile, in the urban area, there is parity with an index of 1.00, i.e. the same opportunities for girls and boys. At the higher education level, gross enrolment rates show a slight bias in favour of women. In contrast, there are clear differences in literacy levels, as women of 10 years and older have a higher illiteracy index, mainly in the rural sector (27.1 per cent).

  A more in-depth analysis of gender inequalities reveals a gap in school attendance in poor rural zones. In 2004, women's school attendance was 29.5 per cent, compared to 34.5 per cent for men. Illiteracy is also concentrated among women and in rural areas.

  Data for 2004 show that gender equity in primary and secondary enrolment was not achieved nationally or in rural areas, where a slight bias against girls persists. The effort to be made represents an IPS of 0.5, and is located in the second cycle of primary education.[16]

- Pilot project "Preparation of coexistence manuals[17] with a gender and human rights perspective", to provide standards for relations in the educational community without discrimination for pregnant girls and mothers, recognizing their rights to stay in formal education.

- Guarantee of the continuity in the formal education system for pregnant teenagers and teenage mothers, prohibiting both national and private schools from expelling teenagers because they become pregnant. A public service office has been created within the Ministry Education, which receives reports of discrimination against pregnant students and mothers. These allegations are followed up and the school has to allow the students to return.

[16] Progress report on achieving the Millennium Development Goals, MINED.

[17] Coexistence manuals include the disciplinary regulations of each institution from the standpoint of respect for human rights and values formation.

- Education for life programme, coordinated with the Ministry of Education, the National Secretariat for the Family and Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance. This programme includes the gender perspective among its components, which is mainstreamed through all activities implemented within the programme at the formal education level (curricula development, teachers' professional development, pedagogic assistance), and informally (Youth Brigade members, parents, young people participating in Open Schools).[18]

- Preparation and validation of manuals entitled "Norms and procedures for the prevention and care services in relation to pregnancies in schools" and "Norms and procedures for the prevention and care services in relation to sexual abuse in schools".

- The "Young Country" programme implemented by all government ministries and private organizations, for which the target population for provide comprehensive services consists of adolescents and young adults of both sexes in the components of promotion of mental and physical health, education and values, art and culture, work, skill development and abilities, protection and maintenance of the environment, stimulation of talent and excellence, sports and healthy leisure. The programme was completed in 2004, however, and given the need to strengthen programmes for youth, the Youth Secretariat was created.

g. Equal opportunities to participate actively in sports and physical education;

- **Design of methodological guidelines with a gender perspective for physical education, targeting teachers from first to ninth grade.**

h. Access to specific information to help to ensure the health and well-being of families, including information and advice on family planning.

- **6,000 young leaders of both sexes have been trained using the peer methodology,[19] to discuss topics with other young people, such as: prevention of teenage pregnancy, prevention of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and HIV/AIDS, gender violence and life projects.**

- **Production of education materials for "Comprehensive sexuality education": Methodological guidelines for the Education for Life series, Adolescence Module, Sexuality Module, Sexual and Reproductive Health Module, Awareness-Raising Manual for Comprehensive Education on Sexuality in the Family, Module: My life project "Thinking of my future", "Let's go down new roads: Masculinity", Module: "A time for everything: Responsible maternity and paternity."**

[18] "Open Schools" is a State programme run by the Ministry of Education, which promotes, motivates, and organizes the creation of groups, clubs, academies, brigades and workshops with young people within the school infrastructure during annual school holidays.

[19] Peer methodology: "among equals". In this case, young leaders of both sexes were trained; and they will also train other young people. This methodology ensures greater empathy and assimilation of the subject matter.

- **Technical and legal services and monitoring in cases of sexual harassment and abuse in schools.**

The Committee recommends efforts be intensified to deal with this problem, with sustained execution of programmes and plans, particularly in rural and indigenous areas.

At the present time, 34 per cent of Salvadoran families nationwide are headed by women, so the current government plan is developing programmes targeting this population group, with a view to training and strengthening their labour market participation. In addition, the Ministries of Education, Health and Employment are coordinating efforts to implement programmes[20] that help improve the situation of the female population in rural areas.

As lead agency of the National Policy for Women, ISDEMU is implementing the Productive Engagement Plan which includes training and production centres for women in nine municipalities, productive initiatives in 21 municipalities, and a training component that includes the topics of gender, environment, civic and political participation, local development, prevention of HIV/AIDS, prevention of domestic violence, among others.

It should be noted that on 9 August 2005 the Ombudsman Office for Human Rights set up a permanent dialogue mechanism with representatives from indigenous groups, known as "Permanent Roundtable on Indigenous Affairs", with the aim of putting forward solutions to the problems suffered by this population sector. The Roundtable includes the Salvadoran Indigenous Peoples National Coordinating Council (CCNIS), among other indigenous organizations.

The Solidarity Network Programme of the Technical Secretariat of the Office of the President has designed a census to provide services for indigenous populations, entitled "Indigenous Development Project". This programme consists of three components:

COMPONENT 1: INDIGENOUS PLAN 2005

Item	Unit cost US$	Total cost US$
To develop a module on inter-culturality and the indigenous populations of El Salvador (including a strategy on information, education and communication for indigenous peoples).	5,000	5,000
2 two-day workshops at the central level	2,000	4,000
2 two-day workshops in each of the three regions (central, east, west) = total six workshops	2,000	12,000
35 one-day workshops with local authorities	300	10,500
TOTAL		31.500

[20] Programmes and projects being implemented in rural areas are mentioned in other sections of this report.

COMPONENT 2. INDIGENOUS PLAN, 2005

Item	Unit cost US$	Total cost US$
Anthropological study on knowledge, attitudes and practices in health and nutrition among indigenous communities, to gain better understanding of traditional practices, and to identify and promote good practices.	10,000	10,000
Preparation of a training module entitled "Inter-Cultural Health and Nutrition" for the health network (doctors, nurses, auxiliaries, promoters) and the traditional community network (AIN volunteers, midwives, traditional massage therapists or *sobadores*, etc.), with participation by MINSA health educators and traditional ethnotherapists	10,000	10,000
9 two-day training workshops at the SIBASI level (Morazán, San Miguel, La Libertad, San Salvador (Tonacatepeque), Metapán, Sonsonate, south zone, La Paz, Ahuachapán). The workshops are given to the local community network, including doctors, nurses, promoters, traditional community health agents, *sobadores*, midwives). The same workshop will include AIN-C training. Consultancy package	4,000	36,000
TOTAL		56,000

COMPONENT 3. INDIGENOUS PLAN 2005

Item	Unit cost US$	Total cost US$
35 half-day awareness-raising workshops for civil registry staff in municipalities that have an indigenous population.	300	10,500

This programme has also conducted studies based on the presence of indigenous population groups in El Salvador; and eight communities were selected that have a significant indigenous communities — Guatajiagua, San Simón, Joateca, San José Cancasque, Cuisnahuat, Santo Domingo de Guzmán, Masahuat and Guaymango — to start with the indigenous development project. The territory of the eight municipios catalogued as indigenous is distributed among the country's three geopolitical and administrative regions as follows: three municipalities in the eastern region, one in the central region, and four in the western region.

Distribution of municipalities and indigenous communities by region and department

FAMILIES SOLIDARITY NETWORK

REGION	DEPARTMENT	MUNICIPALITY	COMMUNITY	INDIGENOUS PEOPLE
Eastern	1. Morazán	1. Guatajiagua	1. Abelines	Lenca
		2. San Simón	2. El Potrero	
		3. Joateca	3. Patuela	
CENTRAL	2. Chalatenango	4. Cancasque	4. Concepción	Chorti (in danger of extinction)
Western	3. Sonsonate	5. Cuisnahuat	5. San Lucas	Nahuat/Pipil
		6. Sto. Domingo Guzmán	6. El Carrizal	
	4. Santa Ana	7. Masahuat	7. Honduritas	
			8. La Ruda	
	5. Ahuachapán	8. Guaymango	9. San Martín	

To ascertain the number of people of indigenous descent in El Salvador more certainly, the 2007 Population and Housing Census includes a question on people's ethnic origin.

> The Committee is concerned about the persistence of traditional stereotypes in relation to the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and in society generally.

Coordinated work to help eliminate traditional stereotypes that marginalize and discriminate against women is done by institutions, such as:

The National Secretariat for the Family (SNF)

Development and execution of the Strengthening Values Programme, which aims to inculcate good practices in family relations, promoting unity, respect and good practices for coexistence. This is undertaken by disseminating messages in various communications media such as television, radio and the written press.

Development and execution of the Education for Life Programme, which aims to contribute to the formation of children, adolescents and young people, to develop adequate self-esteem and learn to channel their emotions and sexuality responsibly, and be capable of constructing and defining their own life project.

Programme areas are: (a) life project; (b) comprehensive education on sexuality; (c) prevention of domestic violence and gangs; (d) prevention of addiction; and (e) prevention of disasters.

Priority is given to fulfilling the provisions of the Family Code, particularly those that help change traditional roles that place women at a disadvantage, which are contained in Title II, Personal Relations and Assets Among Spouses. Chapter I, Personal relations Article 39. "Neither spouse may restrict the right of the other to perform lawful activities, pursue studies or acquire knowledge; to this end, they must cooperate with and assist each other, organizing life in the home, ... Housework and child care shall be the responsibility of both spouses."

Signing of the Technical Cooperation Agreement with the Office of the Prosecutor General of the Republic for coordination and cooperation in cases referred by the National Secretariat for the Family, for the purpose of protecting the rights of women and the over-riding interest of children.

Dissemination of the importance of boys' and girls' right to identity. The following actions, among others, have been undertaken in this area: the Legislative Assembly was presented with the Draft Special Transitory Law to include minors who were not registered in the Family Status Register on the National Registry of Natural Persons; and a coordination agreement was signed to pursue strategies to disseminate the right to identity. Legal assistance is being provided on all family relation issues.

As a contribution towards improving the relations and responsibilities of men within the family, the Office of the Prosecutor General of the Republic provides free legal and psychosocial services in processes of marriage (121) divorce (378), recognition of children (1,827), personal care (601), domestic violence (655), establishment of maintenance payments (5,149).

National Council for Culture and Art (CONCULTURA)

With the aim of disseminating the rights of women and helping to promote the abandonment of violent practices against them, CONCULTURA, acting through Educational Cultural Television, Channel 10, transmits programmes on the rights of women and their role in society, as part of the United Nations series "The Rights of Women", EDUSAT "Women In Science" and "Family Coexistence". In addition, in educational television, many women participate in programmes such as "Hoy es un Buen Día" [Today is a Good Day], "Juventud en Línea" [Youth Online], "Franja de la Calidad Educativa" [Educational Quality Zone]; Gente Joven" [Young People] "Panorama Cultural" [Cultural Panorama], "Debate Cultural" [Cultural Debate], "Universo Crítico" [Critical Universe] and "PlaticArte" [Let's Talk Art].

Efforts are also being made to help upgrade the cultural identity of Salvadoran women with a gender perspective, involving participation by the Inter-Institutional Commission formed by ISDEMU, the CONCULTURA, Spanish Cooperation, the Municipality of Suchitoto (Department of Cuscatlán). The aim is to prepare a strategic plan for the Workshop School for Traditional Crafts in Suchitoto, with a view to incorporating more women in the various craft workshops which by tradition have always been considered exclusively male. The courses offered by this school are iron work, bricklaying, carpentry and electricity. All of them aim to form skilled workers capable of working on restoration of the country's cultural and architectural heritage.

> The Committee recommends developing policies and implementing programmes for women and men that help eliminate stereotypes associated with traditional roles in the family, employment, politics, and society.

With the aim of helping to change cultural patterns of responsibilities among men and women in the family, the Office of the Attorney General of the Republic has signed an agreement with the National Council for Public Safety to develop the project "Better Families", targeting schools particularly in marginal areas. This project entails providing legal and technical assistance in cases of domestic violence and child abuse suffered by school students. Its implementation receives support from the Salvadoran Institute for the Integrated Development of the Child (ISNA) and the Francisco Gavidia University. The project has provided services to schools located in the following high-risk zones: República del Uruguay, Distrito Italia, Quezaltepec, La Fortaleza and Concha vda. de Escalón, benefiting an average of 1,500 individuals including students, teaching staff and parents.

Implementation of an awareness-raising programme that has provided over 40 workshops on the importance for municipal development and citizen participation by women in communities and municipalities, which involves councillors of both sexes, leaders, technicians from other local institutions in the cities of San Miguel, Perquín, Torola, Cuyultitán, San Rafael Obrajuelo, San Pedro Nonualco, Zacatecoluca, Santiago Nonualco, Candelaria de la Frontera, Santa Ana, San Julián, Atiquizaya, Santo Domingo de Guzmán, San Antonio del Monte, Sonsácate and Juajúa.

> The Committee is concerned at the lack of priority attention given to women in employment policies, which could heighten vulnerability in the economic adjustment process that the country is going through, particularly the lack of measures to reconcile family and work responsibilities and the persistence of pay differentials for work of equal value.

The National Employment Policy aims to: create conditions that help generate more and better job opportunities and incomes in conditions of equality and transparency, by adopting effective labour market intermediation and adjustment actions, achieving a positive impact on the quality of life among the majority of the population.

The main lines of action would aim to:

- Strengthen the public employment service and bring it closer to workers and employers in regional and local geographic environments, making the most of the decentralization of this service, and facilitating access to employment for the entire population with equal opportunity criteria.
- Improve job quality, help overcome shortcomings in workers of both sexes through training, information and vocational guidance, thereby improving employment conditions.
- Promote inter-institutional participation in local and regional forums (microregions) with a comprehensive approach that consistently encompasses specific training, orientation, information and employment actions which at the same time can generate minimal infrastructures to promote economic and social development in the municipalities and, as a logical consequence, in the country at large.
- Establish an efficient system of labour market analysis to obtain a direct, complete and rapid overview of the labour market environment, making it

possible to project trends in that market for the purpose of planning specific strategies to improve the national employment situation.

- Promote the development of training and labour market participation, with programmes and projects reflecting current demands in productive centres, and targeting groups that find it hard to enter the labour market, such as youth, older adults, women heads of household and disabled persons.
- Increase programmes offering technical assistance and training to promote cooperatives for employees of both sexes who wish to establish or expand the cooperative societies, specially in the rural sector.
- Support the development of a specialized microfinance, technical assistance, administrative and managerial programme to promote autonomous employment and the establishment of small businesses and microenterprises for economic sectors in crisis and for groups of workers that face difficulties entering the labour market.

There are also active employment policies such as:

1. The employment agency programme
2. Management of labour market adjustment programmes
3. Labour market analysis

These measures include:

1. The national job opportunities network.

Creation of a national job opportunities network, which has made it possible for various social actors (e.g. entrepreneurs, churches, civil society organizations, workers and public institutions) to participate in these efforts and contribute to their success.

This programme is considered by the International Labour Organization (ILO) as one of the most important initiatives in the region, aimed at promoting, organizing and facilitating access for citizens of both sexes to a modern employment management service with participation from public and private actors at the local level.

About a year ago, the Ministry of Labour had just seven job centres nationwide. With the National Job Opportunities Network there are now 35.

2. Job fairs

With a view to bringing work opportunities to broad sectors of the population, national job fairs are held with participation from firms in different sectors.

Through the three centres located in the departments of San Salvador, Santa Ana and San Miguel, training in information and communication technologies has been provided for 700 people from this special population sector.

Young people and women heads of household:

Thus far training programmes in the areas of tourism, industry and services have been provided for women heads of household and young people in 13 municipalities in the Gulf of Fonseca region. This programme is intended to benefit over 2,000

workers and entrepreneurs of both sexes from the region. Women graduates from training courses are directly linked to local employment exchange systems.

Support for microenterprises and small businesses.

The National Commission for Microenterprise and Small Businesses has provided technical assistance and training activities particularly targeting the production and marketing of handicrafts, benefiting over 3,000 people through local craft development centres. Women play an important role in the production and marketing of handicrafts.

Activities include the signing of a cooperation agreement for participation in the National Job Opportunities Network signed with the Association of Development of Unmarried Mothers and Widows in El Salvador (ASDEMASYV), which has over 3,000 members.

The core of the agreement has promoted the following actions:

- Installation of software to process job intermediation between its members.
- Training for staff responsible for managing the employment exchange, dealing with the topics of intermediation, vocational guidance and labour market analysis.
- Dissemination of job supply and links to available vacancies in the Employment Offices Network with the firms that use the network.
- Promotion of job fairs for women entrepreneurs

The Employment Department of the Ministry of Labour has also developed a permanent programme of job fairs and labour market intermediation, resulting in the registration of 13,248 women and placement of 15,927, as shown in the following tables:

Table 11

Table showing data on women registered and placed through job fairs

1999	950	322
2000	1,103	426
2001	1,514	1,353
2002	1,591	1,300
2003	1,234	1982
2004	1,666	9,48
Total	**8,058**	**6,331**

The figure shows that the number of women registered increased year by year during the reporting period. Moreover, having entered the labour market, the number of women obtaining jobs has been rising.

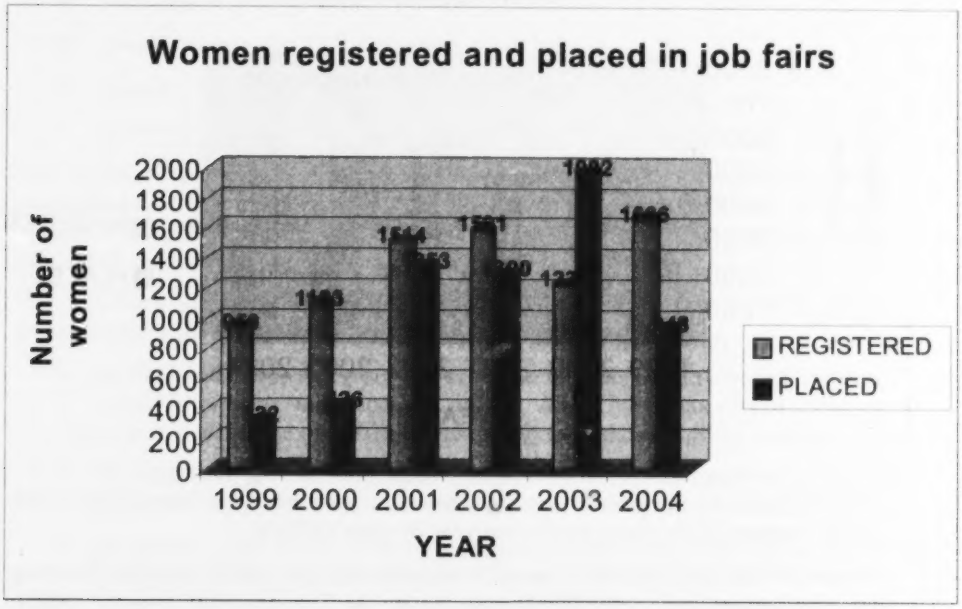
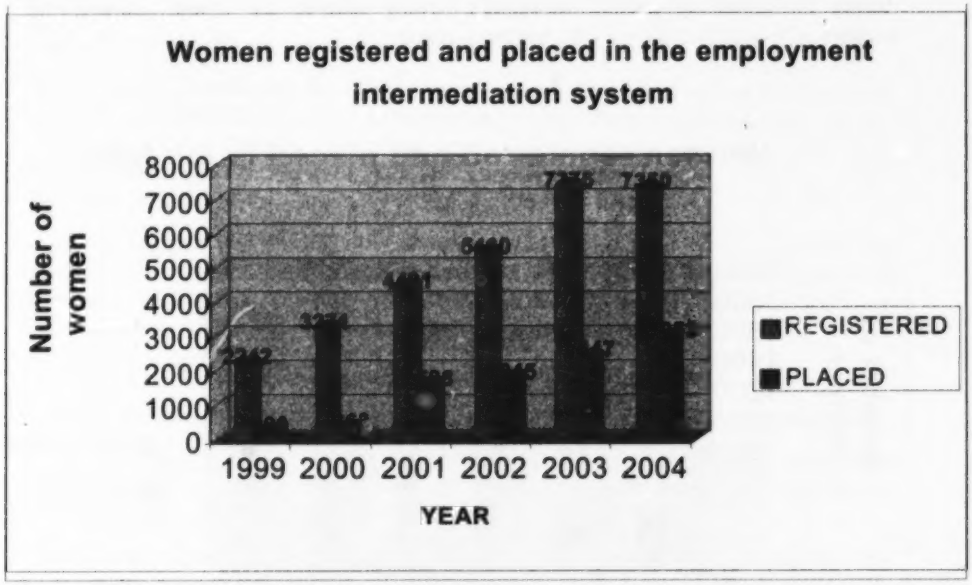


Table 12

Data on women registered and placed through the labour market intermediation system

1999	2,242	290
2000	3,271	363
2001	4,491	1,598
2002	5,460	1,845
2003	7,376	2,447
2004	7,350	3,053
Total	**30,190**	**9,596**



This figure shows the growth curve, for women registered and women placed in the labour market, displaying a significant year-by-year increase.

As part of the National Employment Promotion Plan the project entitled "Training for employment and occupational training in the Fonseca Gulf region" (AECI-MINTRAB) is being implemented, with support from the Spanish International Cooperation Agency (AECI). It has produced the following results:

As part of the strategy for the deconcentration of public employment services the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, a total of 313 local job centres (OLGES) have been set up in municipalities of the Golfo de Fonseca region since 2000. Altogether 2,012 people have registered since 2003, of whom 1,034 are women and 978 men.

During the same period, 1,338 people have been sent to various firms (735 of them women) and a total of 754 workers have been placed in jobs, 113 of whom are training course graduates, including 63 women.

During the three years of project execution, 24 vocational training courses have been held in the Golfo de Fonseca region, involving 17 specialties and five complementary and crosscutting modules. A total of 397 people have graduated from these courses, of whom 194 are women.

The training programmes implemented include the following:

- Repair of fibreglass structures
- Bricklaying and plumbing
- Restaurant and bar tender
- Computer repair and maintenance
- Hotel waiter

- Welder of metallic structures
- Basic office management techniques
- English for public service
- Bar restaurant table waiter
- Tourist route guide - Municipality of San Miguel
- Laundry and ironing
- Preparation and cooking of food

Five crosscutting principles were developed as an integral part of vocational training programmes, including equal opportunities in the workplace between men and women. This line of work prepared two teaching-learning guides, with the aim of promoting conditions of equality.

The following incentives were provided to help low-income women with family responsibilities participate in training programmes:

- In 2003 and 2004, transport was provided to enable course beneficiaries to travel from their municipalities to the ASIGOLFO Vocational Training Centre, located one of the department capitals in the east of the country.
- As from 2005, the mobile training centre strategy was implemented, with the aim of bringing educational actions closer to each municipality.
- Household visits have also been implemented by employment promoters to publicize training courses and raise awareness among members of the family group, to support women's participation in them, highlighting childcare and equal opportunities in choosing non-traditional courses.
- A flexible-hours training programme was implemented to make it easier for women heads of household and workers caring for other family members to participate.

3. Labour market analysis

The Ministry of Labour and Social Security, in coordination with the Salvadoran Vocational Training Institute is undertaking a permanent process of labour market analysis to ensure that the design of the various vocational training programmes responds to real needs in productive sectors.

In 2004, major studies of the labour market were undertaken for the purpose of targeting the design of vocational training programmes, including the following:

- Investigation of training needs in the three main zones of the country (west, central and east)
- Study of training needs among the economically active population in the zones that receive most family remittances,
- A study on strengthening the productive and competitive strategy of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), to take advantage of the benefits of the Free Trade Agreement with the United States.
- Report on the training needs of firms served by the employment agency system, among others.

Institutions such as the National Secretariat for the Family, which coordinates the National Council on the Integrated Care of the Elderly (CONAIPAM), and programmes providing services for older adults, aim to monitor implementation of the following actions among others:

(a) Development of programmes for pensioners of both sexes (providing training, and organizing recreational and cultural activities, etc);

(b) Promotion of the creation of pre-pension committees;

(c) Implementation of actions to provide integrated care for the elderly, particularly health services throughout the Health Centre Network nationwide;

(d) Promotion of the right to a pension and to adjustments therein;

(e) Creation of a services for the elderly unit in all CONAIPAM institutions.[21]

(f) Creation of an employment exchange for disabled persons and older adults wishing to work;

(g) Management of labour market participation projects such as: part-time work in supermarkets, older adult enterprise fairs, among others, where the majority of the beneficiaries are women.

In 2005, over 1,000 women heads of household were benefited, and were given sewing machines and boards to prepare the traditional national dish (pupusas) or tortillas, with a view to running their own business.

As the lead agency and coordinator of the Vocational Training System, the Salvadoran Vocational Training Institute (INSAFORP) organized training activities in different disciplines and areas within its work plan for 2000-2004, with a view to satisfying the demand for economic activities in the productive sector.

According to article 2 of the Vocational Training Act, INSAFORP exists to satisfy the needs for skilled human resources required by the country's economic and social development, and to promote improvements in the living standards of workers and their family groups.

Within this framework, and pursuant to the National Policy on Women, it promotes women's access to vocational training programmes and their permanency in them, to facilitate their entry into the labour market under equal conditions. The following activities are involved:

- Promotion of the creation of special vocational training projects in traditional and non-traditional activities, with the aim of improving the labour market participation of Salvadoran women.
- Incorporation of disabled women in training projects in traditional and non-traditional activities, to facilitate labour market entry.

[21] Members of CONAIPAM: National Secretary for the Family, Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Salvadoran Social Security Institute, National Institute of Pensions for Public Employees, Office of the Attorney General of the Republic, Social Security Institute of the Armed Forces, Geriatrics Association of El Salvador, Corporation of Municipalities of the Republic of El Salvador, Association of Private Enterprise, a representation of associations or foundations legally established and registered at the National Secretariat for the Family which work on behalf of older adults.

- Permanently disseminate vocational training programmes through mass communication and alternative media, encouraging women's participation to train in traditional and non-traditional activities.
- Promote the implementation of a system for monitoring women trained in the various vocational training programmes, helping them to enter world of employment.

With the aim of investigating and monitoring the changing reality of mechanisms that regulate economic and social relations in the labour market, the Labour Market Observatory was created in 2000, to generate, compile, systemize and analyse information on labour market elements.

This information is analysed for the purpose of defining the institutional policy and designing actions to improve the quality of vocational training and employment in El Salvador.

The specific objectives of the Observatory are as follows:

- To help the vocational training system respond to current and future demands of the country's economic and social development.
- To permanently study the characteristics, evolution and trends of the labour market, to provide inputs into the vocational training planning process.
- To help strengthen the links between vocational training and employment in the country.
- To provide feedback to the vocational training system by assessing the impacts of the different training and vocational education programmes.

To fulfil these objectives, the Labour Market Observatory has the following five work areas:

Table 10

No.	Area	Objective
1	Information and analysis	To monitor the evolution, trend and situation of the economy and labour market.
2	Labour supply	To characterize and quantify demands for training for target groups of the EAP and propose actions.
3	Demand for labour	To diagnose training demands among workers of both sexes in firms.
4	Territorial analysis	To obtain and provide information on the situation of labour markets in specific geographical areas.
5	Monitoring and impact assessment	To monitor and evaluate the impact of the different vocational training programmes.

The information provided by the Observatory will be used to analyse the behaviour of the economy as a whole and the various sectors and branches of economic activity, along with local, national and regional labour market trends. It will serve as a space to plan the various programmes to be implemented.

These programmes are developed by the Vocational Training System which start with the Initial Training System targeting the population in the empowerment and practical firm-centre training modalities, and the Continuous Training Programme aimed at active workers of both sexes in firms.

The initial training programme provides training in a job for young people or adults with low levels of schooling, who have no knowledge or work experience, or who are unemployed or underemployed, with the aim of improving their skills for labour market entry.

In 2004, INSAFORP organized 816 training actions for 19,385 participants, of whom 58 per cent were women and 42 per cent men. The courses were implemented in the country's 14 departments, covering 212 municipalities.

The training courses undertaken in 2004 include: beekeeping; cultivation of chilli growing, papaya and tomato; prophylactic plan and management of egg-laying hens, beef cattle fattening, chicken fattening, pig breeding, carpentry, printing, automobile electricity and mechanics, handicrafts, etc.

In all of these programmes, women's participation has increased by 7 per cent compared to the 2003 level.

Initial training programme with a practical focus

Firm-Centre Vocational Courses are part of a training strategy with a social focus, whose main characteristic is to link practical training in a firm with the theory taught at a training centre. Courses are mostly aimed at low-income young people who have no possibility of continuing high level studies.

The Firm-Centre programme targets young people between 16 and 25 years of age, with a minimum level of schooling of sixth grade, according to the specialty. The overriding objective of the programme is to prepare new active workers to hold down skilled jobs requiring manual ability and technical knowledge that can only be acquired over relatively long periods of time.

The objective is to promote and guarantee equal opportunities in this important sector of the labour force, in the various job exchange and management programmes implemented by the Ministry of Labour, such as employment fairs and the placement system implemented by the National Job Opportunities Network.

In addition to these actions, a job intermediation software has recently been launched which provides a flexible and efficient tool for recruiting and selecting human resources, and includes the personalized service model and a self-service website.

This tool enables job searchers to access a job opportunity either from their own homes or from the information centre, thereby putting El Salvador at the forefront of all other ministries of labour in the Central American region.

The service provided through this network is characterized as public, free and egalitarian, since it aims to encourage and maintain the principles of equal opportunities for the whole population, without discrimination of any kind. This tool will give workers access to multiple jobs, linking them to the different training programmes implemented by the Salvadoran Vocational Training Institute, and reaching population groups located furthest away from departmental capitals.

It is also important to stress that in the period 2003-2004, an awareness-raising and training programme was implemented to promote equal opportunity employment conditions in free zones.

This programme directly benefited about 600 women who were working as industrial machine operators, supervisors and human resource managers in the International Free Zone, one of the country's most important maquila textile production centres employing about 2,000 women workers. The main topics covered in this training and awareness-raising programme are gender equity and the promotion of adequate of job safety and health conditions.

In terms of monitoring and oversight of compliance with labour regulations it is important to note the creation of a Special Unit on Gender and Prevention of Discriminatory Employment Actions within the Ministry of Labour and Social Security.

The overriding objective of this unit is to guarantee employment rights for vulnerable groups such as pregnant women, who, given their condition, are vulnerable to arbitrary acts against their health and job stability.

As part of this unit's monitoring and surveillance programme, 2,115 women workers have thus far been attended or benefited; and 85 complaints had been received from women of which 60 have been favourably resolved. At the time of writing, 25 cases are currently being processed, all of them related to the protection of women's rights, particularly situations involving dismissal during pregnancy and employment discrimination.

In short, work has been done to strengthen and modernize the Directorate General for Labour Inspection, and all other operational offices of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, to provide them with technological, organizational and functional tools to help fulfil their functions in relation to overseeing compliance with legal standards on employment, welfare, pensions and social security; to achieve stricter control of labour standards that recognize the legal rights of the country's workers, particularly in the maquila sector. Work will continue in the ongoing improvement of the quality of the labour inspection service and inter-institutional coordination to ensure that the technical inspection system referred to in article 44 of the Constitution of the Republic is strengthened to improve the protection of employment rights.

> The Committee recommends taking the decisions needed to guarantee the fulfilment of the provisions of article 11 of the Convention and application of the relevant ILO Conventions ratified by El Salvador.

As a result of the commitment shown by the State of El Salvador in relation to employment issues, significant improvements have recently been made in implementing employment legislation, for which the Ministry of Labour and Social Security has undertaken following actions:

- Publication and dissemination of new circulars on compliance with legislation in respect of illegal dismissal of union leaders, and acts of anti-union employment discrimination (black lists), and the sanctions applicable to these violations. (2005)

- Preparation of administrative instructions for labour inspection staff, on the effective application of legal obligations referred to in the circulars, and requirement of regular reports from inspectors. (2005)

- In coordination with the Office of the Superintendent of Pensions and the Salvadoran Institute of Social Security, it has undertaken a comprehensive inspection initiative to protect the social security and pension contributions of female workers from misappropriation by the employer. (2004)

- The Ministry and the Office of the Ombudsman have signed a memorandum of understanding to guarantee female workers access to free legal advice when filing an employment complaint. (2004)

- The number of Ministry staff members engaged in overseeing compliance with employment regulations has been increased from 73 to 122 (2002-2004), for the purpose of improving coverage in work places.

- The Government approved an additional budget of US$2 million for 2005 allowing for 154 additional employees to be hired to fulfil employment standards, i.e. more than doubling the existing capacity. (2005)

- Employment legislation has been amended to prohibit pregnancy tests, or medical certificates in relation to such tests, as a condition for obtaining a job (2004).

- Publication and dissemination of a new public circular explaining that requiring pregnancy tests constitutes a violation of the law and is punishable, and that enforcing of this provision is a Ministry priority. (2005)

- In coordination with the Ministry of Economic Affairs, it has signed a memorandum of understanding setting forth guidelines and procedures on the use of free zone legislation[22] to guarantee fulfilment of fundamental labour laws. The Ministry of Labour has also published a circular to be distributed among managers and persons using the free zone, on the requirements and obligations for fulfilment of employment laws, in which it gives information on the procedures established in a memorandum between the two Ministries. (2005)

- The government launched a programme entitled "Employment harmony and progress for all" with a view to strengthening social dialogue on employment issues, particularly in relation to freedom of association and collective bargaining in the public sector. (2005)

> The Committee is particularly concerned at the precarious employment conditions faced by women working in maquila industries, where frequently their human rights are violated, particularly in relation to safety and hygiene measures.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Security, acting through their operational departments, in conjunction with the regional and departmental Employment Offices, constantly monitors the employment conditions of workers of both sexes in the maquila industry throughout the Republic. This involves both programmed and unprogrammed inspections, i.e. inspecting on their own initiative and at the request of workers following an alleged violation of the employment and workplace health and security rights of the working population in this branch of the national economy, in which 83 per cent of workers are women. Evidence of the work done by this Ministry to help improve employment conditions and workplace health and hygiene

[22] The term "free zone" is used in El Salvador to refer to "maquilas".

in the maquila industries and in all workplaces throughout the country, is provided by the programmes, measures, initiatives and projects described below:

Improvement of occupational safety and hygiene conditions:

- The most important initiative undertaken by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security to help raise occupational health and safety conditions for women workers in the maquila industry sector and all other sectors, is the preparation, with participation by workers, employers and the government sector, of the **Draft General Law on the Prevention of Workplace Risks**, which has been presented to, and is currently being processed by, the Nation Legislative Assembly of El Salvador. When it comes into force, this legislation will serve as the regulatory framework for modernizing and updating regulations on workplace health and safety conditions in all the country's workplaces, particularly in the maquila industry sector, thereby raising the occupational safety and hygiene standards of women workers in that sector.

- With the leadership of El Salvador, acting through the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the Foundation to Support the Regional Occupational Health and Safety Centre (FUNDACERSSO) was created and set up in the country, with a mission to help reduce workplace hazards, illnesses and accidents by implementing training and learning programmes to reduce workplace hazards, illnesses and accidents. It also seeks to improve occupational health and create safety mechanisms in the employment environment, and strengthen the capacity of the region's employment ministries to act to promote occupational health and safety. This has been considered by international organizations as a unique standardization, coordination and consensus initiative for actions of occupational health and safety in the Central American region, and thus a model that is worth implementing in other regions of the American continent and throughout the world.

- Implementation of the **programme for the promotion and dissemination of pedagogic-didactic materials on occupational health and safety in firms.**

  a. Electronic version of the **"do it yourself" cost-benefit evaluation methodology for investments in occupational health and safety in firms** (Toolkit).

  This methodology enables firms to ascertain occupational hazard levels in the workplace, and to be aware of the mechanisms and measures available for reducing and controlling them.

  It also provides a series of formulas for calculating the investment costs of preventive measures and comparing them with the expenses the firm would incur if a workplace accident occurred, thus giving the firm a numerical estimate of how it much saves by investing in occupational health and safety.

  This methodology will soon be available in an electronic version, making it easier for firms to evaluate for themselves the conditions and levels of hazard that exist in the workplace, using electronic tables and files, for the purpose of implementing the necessary preventive measures. This project has been specially promoted for the country's maquila textile enterprises to prevent workplace hazards and illnesses among the women workers in that sector.

b. Guidelines on the design, implementation, evaluation and oversight of occupational health and safety programmes

This methodology sets out a series of practical steps organized in stages for entrepreneurs to ascertain the content of an occupational hazard programme and how to implement it in their workplace or firm in the most practical and simple way, with participation from all people involved in the productive process. The guidelines provide mechanisms for preparing the firm's hazard prevention programme, which will include:

- The firm's hazard prevention policy
- Register of workplace accidents and professional illnesses
- Design of an emergency and evacuation plan
- Planning of all hazard prevention and control activities

The guidelines highlight the role of occupational health and safety committees, which have become an effective mechanism for improving employment conditions in firms. For that reason, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security has been tireless in promoting their creation and strengthening in various productive sectors, textile maquila in particular.

c. Didactic material for training actions

This material consists of a variety of educational leaflets aimed particularly at workers of both sexes in the textile maquila sector, the content of which aims to provide guidance, using simple language, on the professional hazards that exist in their workplace and how to prevent them. These didactic inputs will enable maquila workers to improve their knowledge and awareness of the issue, and guide them in correct use of the personal protection equipment issued to them at the workplace, as well as playing a more dynamic role in the firm's preventive activity.

These didactic materials are appropriate means for the firms in the country to strengthen their capacity in terms of professional hazard prevention, given the new regulations that are being prepared on the subject; and they will also enable them to maintain and raise occupational health and safety standards in the framework of the free-trade agreements signed by El Salvador, significantly benefiting workers of both sexes in all sectors, particularly maquila, by guaranteeing healthy and safe workplaces.

- **Other occupational health and safety training and awareness-raising programmes promoted by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security to publicize and raise occupational health and safety conditions.**

1. Occupational safety and hygiene project in the maquila textile sector (IDB-SIECA)

This project is sponsored by the Labour Market Modernization Programme (IDB-SIECA) and aims to raise awareness among maquila workers of both sexes, and the employers of this productive sector, and to provide them with practical tools for preventive management.

This programme contains the following components:

1. ***Training programme***: This component involves 16 courses on occupational hazard prevention, to be held in the different free zones located across the country.

2. ***Dissemination strategy***: This encompasses the "design and preparation of a graphic information magazine", the content of which will refer to the various project activities; together with guidance for both workers and employers in preventing occupational hazards in their productive activity.

3. ***Support for promulgation of the new regulations on occupational hazard prevention.***

2. Project to promote healthy workplace environments.

This project is being implemented throughout the country with from the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), in coordination with the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the Ministry of Health and Salvadoran Social Security Institute.

This project will disseminate a **"Toolkit"** for the comprehensive promotion of workers' health, using a approach.

The methodology will be taught in various firms through attendance-based and distance courses to be provided by a National Facilitating Committee, consisting of representatives from institutions that promote occupational health and safety throughout the country.

3. Design of the first Masters course on workplace hazard prevention and safety.

With support from the Polytechnic University of El Salvador and the Polytechnic University of Madrid (Spain), under an agreement with the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, a study programme is being designed to implement the first Masters course on workplace hazard prevention and safety. This is a unique effort in El Salvador and will provide us with professionals who can fulfil higher-level functions in the workplace health and safety area. This initiative is of major benefit of the country, because professional hazard prevention is becoming a priority issue in free trade agreements, which require high standards of occupational health and safety in firms that employ a large number of female workers, such as maquila, and therefore high qualifications for the professionals responsible for dealing with this issue in the firms concerned.

A project has also been implemented entitled **"Support for restructuring the inspection area of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security"**. The main purpose of the project is to support the Ministry of Labour and Social Security in implementing the organizational-functional changes to help establish a new user-service model and process-based organization in the Directorate-General of Labour Inspection; and to provide employment inspectors with training on the development of inspection procedures and the continuous quality and improvement model. This project covers the central, regional and departmental offices of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, in issues relating to the execution of competencies of the Directorate General of Labour Inspection. During execution of this project, the procedural steps for labour inspection have been reviewed and reformulated along with all other services provided by that

Directorate, with a view to streamlining and shortening response times for users, i.e. expediting and improving access to labour inspection services for women workers in the maquila sector, in terms of overseeing compliance with labour legislation.

- Installation of the **electronic system for monitoring labour inspection cases**, with a view to undertaking computerized control of each inspection request submitted to the Directorate General for Labour Inspection and providing immediate information to the user on the status of their case or request submitted to the DGIT.

- Implementation of the **continuous development plan for employment inspectors**, with the aim of training the team of inspectors throughout the country to acquire technical concepts and skills on labour inspection and make their work efficient and effective. This is a comprehensive training plan for employment inspectors that results in better quality inspection and stronger protection for the employment rights of workers of both sexes, particularly in the maquila sector.

- Creation in July 2005 of the **Special Unit on Gender and the Prevention of Discriminatory Employment Acts** within the organizational structure of the Directorate General of Employment Inspection. The Unit's main function is to prevent and monitor cases of discrimination against workers in the maquila sector, on grounds such as being carriers HIV/AIDS, pregnancy, and union membership. In other words, the aim is to provide special protection to workers, from the pre-contractual stage and throughout the employment relation, protecting them from discrimination particularly on the grounds indicated above.

- Implementation of a seminar workshop entitled: **"Continuous improvement of employment conditions in the maquila industry"** in July 2006, involving active participation from labour inspection staff throughout the country. In this training activity, employment inspectors received training on inspection techniques in complex cases such as: discrimination and harassment in the workplace, and a broad view of the regulations on labour relations for women workers in the maquila sector.

- Relaunch of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, endowed with a modern new building that provides security and comfort for users and staff; and an increase in its institutional budget that has enabled it to hire 99 employment inspectors and 40 occupational health and safety technicians, in addition to those already existing. This has made it possible to strengthen the various areas of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security which aim to oversee compliance with labour legislation in firms and particularly in industries or firms operating in the maquila sector.

- The Ministry of Labour and Social Security maintains coordination and collaboration with women's NGOs, participating in activities to disseminate the employment rights of women workers in the maquila sector, and responding to requests for inspection in workplaces where there are signs that employment laws are being violated.

- The employment rights of women workers in the maquila and other sectors are overseen by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, through the following mechanisms in particular: inspection and education mechanisms, e.g. where the employer submits the internal employment regulation of its firm for approval in the General-Directorate for Labour Inspection, special care is taken to ensure the use of gender-sensitive language in the instrument's various provisions; and under no circumstances may internal regulations contain provisions that have a discriminatory component or dimension, particularly in staff selection processes.
- Preparation and dissemination of the guide to self-evaluation of employment standards, which contains a number of questions, grouped by areas of compliance, which summarize the most important labour standards to be fulfilled by the employer under current labour legislation. The aim here is for the employer to make a ***"self-examination"*** to assess his workplace's compliance with legal provisions on employment, social security and occupational health and safety.

The purposes of this initiative of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security include:

- Informing the employer of the most important labour standards to be fulfilled, as regulated in current labour legislation.
- ensuring that the employer initiates processes in advance to fulfil the law.
- promoting voluntary compliance with the law.

The aforementioned document contains questions for the employer to self-evaluate in the following areas:

- Area: Employment relation
- Area: Salary
- Area: Working day
- Area: Weekly rest period
- Area: Vacation
- Area: Time off
- Area: Bonuses
- Area: Employment of women
- Area: Employment of minors
- Area: Occupational health and safety
- Area: Social Security
- Area: Right of association
- Area: Employment discrimination

The Committee urges the State party to rigorously enforce labour legislation in the maquila industries, including supervision and monitoring, in particular

regarding workplace safety and hygiene measures; and it requests that this aspect to be covered in the next report.

In 2005 the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and the Ministry of Economic Affairs consolidated their supervision of firms in free zones and inward processing warehouses (DPA), through a memorandum of understanding and an initiative to strengthen coordination of the respective work, with the aim of guaranteeing fulfilment of the rights and obligations established in the Export Processing Zones Act.

Both ministries have powers under the aforementioned regulation and the Labour and Social Security (Organizations and Functions) Act to supervise maquila enterprises and apply the corresponding fines.

Under the agreement, the Directorate-General of Labour Inspection and the Directorate of Trade and Investment will establish mechanisms for applying sanctions, pursuant to the procedures established in the Export Processing Zones Act. To implement this, the two ministries will periodically have to share information on the sectors of interest. In addition, the Directorate-General of Labour Inspection will notify the Directorate of Trade and Investment of instances of non-compliance with the free zone law, for the latter to apply the respective sanctions.

Pursuant to article 31 of the Export Processing Zones Act, the Directorate of Trade and Investment imposes the corresponding administrative sanction, having previously allowed the alleged violator to present their defence. Statistics for 2004 show that there are 142 maquila establishments in the country (61 in export processing zones and 81 in DPAs), which generate a total of 74,174 jobs, mostly for women.

These firms are grouped in 13 industrial parks: San Bartolo, San Marcos, El Progreso, Exportsalva, El Pedregal, American Park, Internacional, Lido, Miramar, San Ana, free zone 10, Santa Tecla and Santa Lucía.

Support for supervision

To strengthen the commitment of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security in the inspection area, the Minister of Labour signed three circulars addressed to the Directorate General of Labour Inspection and the Directorate General of Employment. Two of these aim to prevent discrimination in hiring, while the other insists on the need to reinstate union members who have been unfairly dismissed. Circular No. 001/05 requires the aforementioned directorates to confirm with employers, both public and private, that they do not demand pregnancy tests or HIV/AIDS tests at the time of hiring staff. Circular No. 002/05 seeks to prevent discrimination in staff hiring against persons who have belonged to or currently belong to labour union organizations. Circular No. 003/05 recommends taking steps to reinstate labour union leaders who have had been unfairly dismissed.

Although there is legislation on trafficking, and there is mention of a draft law on the exploitation of children, the Committee is concerned by the problem of the exploitation of prostitutes and trafficking of women and girls, and the lack of studies, analyses and gender-sensitive statistics on the incidence of this problem.

El Salvador recognizes the definition of human trafficking provided in the Palermo Protocol, which states: "Trafficking in persons shall mean the recruitment,

transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of external prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs."

In this regard, aware of the scourge of human trafficking, El Salvador has made commitments to combat and prevent human trafficking, and to provide services for its victims. It has also undertaken, and continues to implement, coordinated actions with other mechanisms both nationally and regionally. What has been and is being done are set out below:

At the international level:

El Salvador is party to the following international regulatory instruments

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified in 1990.
- ILO Convention 182 concerning the Worst Forms of Child Labour, ratified in 2001.
- United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, ratified by Legislative Decree No. 165 of 16 October 2003.
- Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, to supplement the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (Palermo Protocol), ratified through D.L. No. 166 of 16 October 2003.
- Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, complementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, ratified by El Salvador through D.L. 16 October 2003.
- Optional Protocol of the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, ratified by the Legislative Assembly of El Salvador on 24 February 2004.

At the national level:

El Salvador has incorporated the following reforms into its national legislation.

At the national level, human trafficking is a crime. Accordingly, with the aim of preventing and combating it, the crime of human trafficking has been introduced into article 367-B of the Penal Code, through Legislative Decree No. 362, which was published in the Official Gazette (Diario Oficial) on 8 January 2004.

Similarly, with a view to completing the definition of the crime of human trafficking, another reform was introduced to define aggravating circumstances in this type of crime. This was approved by Legislative Decree No. 457 of 7 October 2004 and published in the Official Gazette No. 207, volume 365, of 8 November 2004.

The aforementioned articles state that anyone who, for the purpose of obtaining economic benefit, recruits, transports, transfers, harbours or receives individuals,

within or outside national territory for the purpose of engaging in any of the modalities of human trafficking, shall be subject to between four and eight years in prison. It is further established that when the victim is under 18 years of age or incapable, the penalty will be increased by one third of the maximum indicated.

It is important to note that a sentence of between three and six years' imprisonment is established for anyone who facilitates, promotes or favours any of the modalities of trafficking.

As a State party of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, El Salvador has assumed the commitment of taking immediate, necessary and effective steps to protect boys, girls and adolescents against sexual abuse and all forms of commercial sexual exploitation through the current national policy on integrated development of childhood and adolescence (PNDINA)

For the fulfilment of this policy, a letter of understanding has been signed between the Salvadoran Institute for the Integrated Development of Children and Adolescents, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the Ministry of Public Health and Social Security, the Ministry of Foreign Relations, the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women, the National Judiciary Council, the General Inspectorate of the Republic, the National Civil Police Force, the Legislative Assembly Commission on the Family, Women and Children, the Salvadoran Women's National Coordinating Association, the Council for Development of the Communities of Morazán and San Miguel, the Huellas Foundation, and the Network to Combat the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents.

This letter of understanding aims to "set up a round table to eradicate, prevent and protect against the commercial sexual exploitation of children and adolescents in El Salvador, and to maintain timely, fluent, constant and coordinated communication on the proposals, plans and activities undertaken jointly by the institutions involved, to ensure adequate implementation of actions to effectively address the problem of commercial sexual exploitation of children and adolescents in El Salvador.

The commitments acquired in the round table involve promoting, supporting and participating actively and with a shared vision, according to the competency of each of the institutions comprising it, as reflected in the **National plan on prevention, integrated care for victims, and eradication of commercial sexual exploitation suffered by children and adolescents**.

This plan includes studies and gender-sensitive statistics; but no start has been made with a programme to train technical staff from the Legal Training School, particularly for the application of these instruments.

The Vice-Ministry of Foreign Relations responsible for Salvadoran people abroad has undertaken the following actions:

Visits to the Guatemala-Mexico border

The Vice Ministry organized a working visit to the Guatemala-Mexico borders on 25, 36 and 27 July 2005, with the following objectives: (1) inauguration of the Centre for Services for Salvadoran Migrants at the La Hachadura border. (2) Ascertaining the conditions faced by migrants on the border between Guatemala and Mexico, in respect of the treatment received by Salvadoran nationals who are detained for emigrating without documents. (3) Overview of the problem of

smuggling of migrants and human trafficking. (4) Placement of informative posters in the main sites where Salvadoran nationals are detained or pass through, warning of the risks of migrating without documents, among other issues.

This mission consisted of members of the Legislative Assembly, government mechanisms, international organizations and civil society, along with media representatives.

An initial visit had been made to that border in August 2002, to gain an overview of the phenomenon of undocumented migration and the human rights situation of Salvadoran migrants.

The visit produced the following results:

With Guatemala

On 18 August 2005 the Foreign Ministries of El Salvador and Guatemala and the Respective Directorates General of Migration signed the following documents:

(a) Memorandum of understanding between the Republic of El Salvador and Republic of Guatemala for the protection of victims of human trafficking and smuggling of migrants.

(b) Mechanism to facilitate the orderly, swift and safe repatriation of Salvadoran nationals by land from Mexico between the Directorate General of Migration and foreign Relations of the Republic of El Salvador and the Directorate General of Migration of the Republic of Guatemala.

(c) Memorandum of understanding between the Republic of El Salvador and Republic of Guatemala to implement the temporary migrant protection and regularization mechanism for Guatemalans and Salvadorans who are in any regular situation and show their links with the destination country ;

Work has been going on with the Guatemala in the framework of a bilateral technical commission on an action plan to implement the aforementioned memorandum on human trafficking. This plan includes actions to be undertaken jointly in the three areas in which the phenomenon requires work: Prevention, care and combat.

With Mexico

The memorandum of understanding between the Government of the Republic of El Salvador and the Government of the United Mexican States was signed for the protection of women and minors who are victims of illicit human trafficking, on 17 May 2005.

In February 2006, the Embassy of United Mexican States was informed that El Salvador has fulfilled the domestic legal requirements for the aforementioned memorandum to enter into force, in accordance with its article VIII. Accordingly, at the next bilateral meeting with Mexico, the corresponding action plan will start to be produced, and technical and financial support has been arranged from a number of international co-operation agencies to support certain actions with advice and cooperation.

Creation of a comprehensive communication strategy on the topic of migration.

As a result of the visit to Guatemala-Mexico border zones, the need was established to prepare a communication strategy to comprehensively publicize various migration-related issues.

Participants in this effort include the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), UNICEF, MERIDIANO 89, under the coordination of the Vice Ministry of Foreign Relations with Responsibility for Salvadoran Nationals Abroad; and an initial draft of the strategy has been prepared. This will be inaugurated with a radio, press and television campaign to raise awareness of the risks of emigrating without documents, which include people trafficking.

As part of this effort, the Vice Ministry, in coordination with UNICEF and the Ministry of Education, launched a on the "Dangers of the Northern Route", to inform secondary students nationwide.

Creation of the National Committee against human trafficking

The National Committee against Human Trafficking was created under Decree No. 114, published in Official Gazette No. 224, volume 369, on 1 December 2005, with the aim of comprehensively combating this scourge by implementing a national plan to eliminate human trafficking, in conformity with the obligations undertaken by Salvadoran law.

The Committee took office on 6 March 2006, and from then until September, five ordinary meetings had been held.

The Committee consists of representatives from the following ministries and institutions: Ministry of Foreign Relations, (the Chair and Permanent Secretary of the Committee is provided by this Ministry), Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Ministry of Public Health and Social Security, Ministry of Tourism, National Secretariat for the Family, National Civil Police Force, Directorate General of Migration and Foreign Residents, Salvadoran Institute for the Integrated Care of Children and Adolescents, Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women.

To fulfil its objective, the Committee has the following functions:

(a) Prepare the National Plan of Action to Combat Human Trafficking, establishing the priority areas in which efforts should be targeted to combat, prevent, recover and provide services for victims of human trafficking in our country.

(b) Integrate and coordinate efforts aimed at investigating the crime, preventing it, and providing services for victims of human trafficking through national institutions and international organizations.

(c) Implement training activities in this area, taking into account the various modalities of human trafficking;

(d) Publicize efforts aimed at combating the scourge of human trafficking;

(e) Propose, through any of the members of the Committee and with approval of the President of the Republic, legislative initiatives as considered appropriate;

(f) Recommend actions or projects that promote the subject, to government mechanisms of the Committee,;

(g) Promote actions to strengthening and facilitate participation by public and private institutions in combating, preventing and providing care in respect of human trafficking;

(h) Collaborate, at the request of the Ministry of Foreign Relations, in any international reports on the subject that it may be asked to provide;

(i) Attending seminars, courses and specialist conferences at the national and international level;

(j) Propose, to the Chair of the Committee, initiatives aimed at strengthening the country's participation in national forums where this subject is discussed.

(k) Other issues that the Committee considers should be developed for better fulfilment of its main purpose.

The Committee will receive technical assistance and cooperation from the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the International Labour Organization through the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO/IPEC), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Inter-American Commission on Women (CIM/OAS), and any others that the Committee deems necessary.

Members of the Committee were sworn in on 6 March 2006.

Foreign service guidelines for combating human trafficking

Based on the commitment undertaken by El Salvador to prevent, deal with and combat human trafficking, guidelines were prepared on human trafficking for the Foreign Service of El Salvador, the publication of which was financed by ILO.

This guidelines aim to raise awareness of the scourge of human trafficking, among diplomatic and consular representatives (members of the Salvadoran Foreign Service). This document contains information on what to do in the event of being in the presence of possible victims; the information to be obtained, and the national institutions to which the situation should be reported.

Shelter for victims of human trafficking

Thanks to a donation of US$235,000 made by the United States to El Salvador, with support from IOM, a memorandum of understanding was signed on 30 November 2005 between the Government of El Salvador, the International Organization for Migration and the Huellas Foundation to implement the project "Shelter for providing care services to victims of human trafficking in El Salvador: A pilot project." This project began operating on 29 April 2006. It is being coordinated by the Huellas Foundation in conjunction with the inter-institutional subcommittee that forms part of the National Committee against Human Trafficking, and IOM. To date some 58 victims of different nationalities have received services, including Nicaraguans, Hondurans, Guatemala, Mexicans, Colombians, and Salvadorans.

Regional framework

As part of the Regional Conference on Migration (CRM), a technical meeting was held in Guatemala City on 9-10 March 2006, in which CRM member countries worked together to agree upon draft regional guidelines on special protection in cases of returning children and adolescents, guidelines that it is hoped will be approved at the meeting of the Regional Consultation Group on Migration, scheduled for 27-29 November 2006.

> The Committee urges the State party to take steps to combat the phenomenon of trafficking in women and girls and exploitation of prostitutes, to evaluate the phenomenon and compile and systemize gender-specific data on it, with a view to formulating a broad strategy to address the problem and punish the perpetrators.

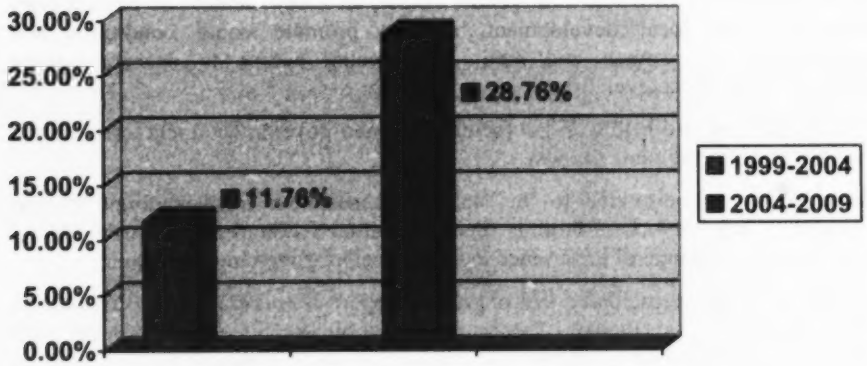
In view of this concern, the Office of the Attorney General of the Republic is developing an inter-institutional strategy against commercial sexual exploitation, which consists of: exchange and socialization workshops to construct a geographic and social map of the critical path of trafficking in children and adolescents; specialized seminars for training on the police handbook and the handbook for applying standards in processes that do not revictimize children and adolescent victims, or those at risk of commercial sexual exploitation; and validation of the curricula training proposal within the National Public Safety Academy, in respect of police intervention to protect children and adolescent victims, or those at risk of commercial sexual exploitation.

> The Committee is concerned at the low percentage of women's political participation, and in high-level posts in all spheres.

The Cabinet of the Government of El Salvador, 2004-2009, consists of 73 entities, of which 21 are headed by women (28.76 per cent), holding posts such as the Vice President of the Republic, Ministers, Vice Ministers, presidents and directors of institutions, secretariat and presidential commissions. In previous period (1999-2004) the proportion was 11.76 per cent, so there has been a 17 percentage-point increase.

Figure 15

Percentage of women participating in central government in the two most recent periods



Women in the Government Cabinet

Participation by women in popularly elected posts

The results of the 2003 municipal council elections showed that Salvadoran women face restrictions when participating and competing for decision-making posts in such events, particularly within political parties which have not changed much. Women's participation is numerically small, mainly in the most important posts, despite their contribution to the country's development. It has also been, and still is, systematically and permanently reserved to limited and low-profile space. In the most recent elections however, women gained a larger number of councillor posts in the category of síndico (second rank) and both incumbent and alternate regidoras.

In view of the fact that local government is the domain that is closest to citizens, this is the space in which women reflect and profile their work and recognition by the population and political leaders, in addition to working to gain election to popularly elected posts. In this framework, the Institute is preparing a diagnostic study in municipalities led by women and those led by men in the country's four zones, to identify the difficulties faced by the female population in terms of citizen participation; and, based on the results, a strategy is being implemented to promote citizen and political participation, together with a participatory workplan that helps improve the position and status of this population group.

Based on these results, a strategy is being implemented to promote local civic and political participation, through awareness-raising and training for community and political party leaders, to raise their self-esteem and strengthen their capacities.

With the aim of increasing women's political participation, the Corporation of Municipalities of the Republic of El Salvador (COMURES) is implementing the Institutional Policy on Gender Equity, and a Committee on the Family, Women and Children was created within the COMURES Board of Directors, as a specific

mechanism that has helped form the institution's gender policy with support from international organizations.

The content of this policy, and elements needed to implement it were presented to COMURES employees to raise their awareness of the subject. They were also disseminated in the 262 municipalities at four regional events to gain support from union members of both sexes on gender equity, as a key element of participatory democracy and local development, and to promote equal conditions and opportunities for women and men, guaranteeing access to decision-making processes at the local level.

Workshops were also held with government and non-governmental and international organizations for the same purpose.

Support has been provided to the National Association of Salvadoran Women Councillors and Mayors, in holding their six National Congresses with the aim of promoting an exchange of experience in the municipal government domain.

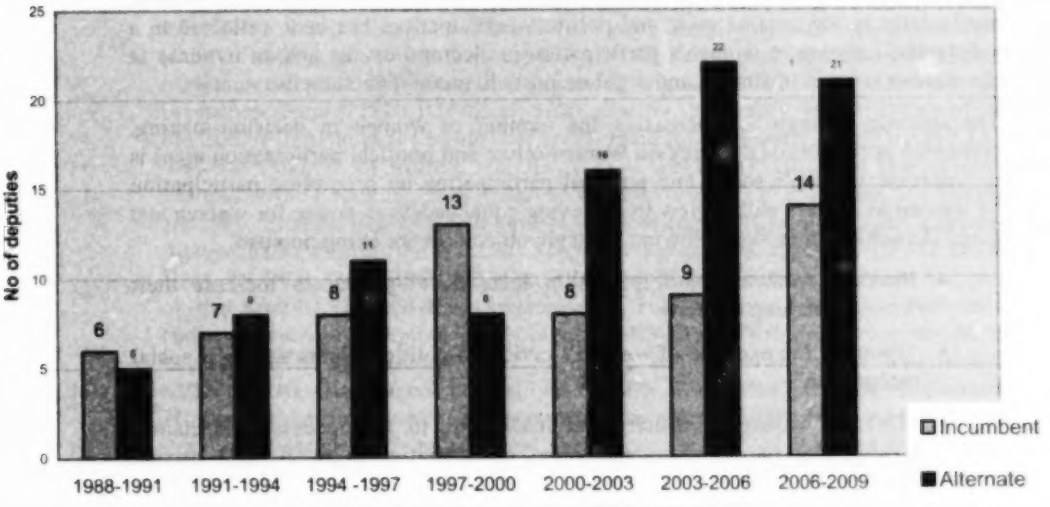
In addition, it has participated and provided support in coordination with women's NGOs such as "Las Dignas". The municipality of San Salvador has held three contests on "Affirmative Action to Promote Women's Political Participation in Local Development2, with the aim of rewarding municipalities that favour gender equity in their plans, programmes and budgets, and which have included a proposal, together with a methodology and resources, to guarantee women's participation in local government.

In El Salvador, achieving social equity and eliminating discrimination are constitutional mandates. The Constitution recognizes all persons as equal before the law; and in order to uphold civil rights, no restrictions can be established on the basis of differences in nationality, race, sex or religion.

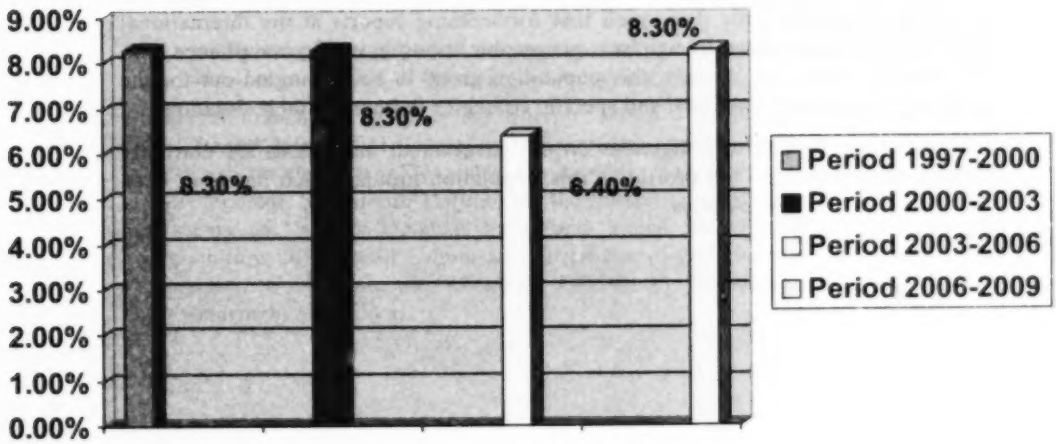
The 1983 Constitution recognizes the diversity of the population and the existence of inequities; and it identifies the need to design specific mechanisms to overcome all inequities arising class, ethnic origin, religious and gender differences.

Other institutions such as the Social Fund for Local Development (FISDL), implements the Gender Equity Policy and Plan of Action, such that all FISDL actions mainstream the gender perspective and work to close the gaps that have historically existed between women and men. In this context, support has been provided to eight municipalities (San Pedro Nonualco, San Rafael Obrajuelo, Santiago Nonualco, Zacatecoluca, Cuyultitán, Perquín, El Paisnal and Torola) to prepare gender equity policies and action plans by holding workshops aimed at giving municipal governments a tool to reduce gender gaps in their municipalities.

Women in the legislative assembly, by period, incumbent and alternate deputies, 1988-2006



Percentage of women mayors in four periods



The Committee recommends strategies be adopted to increase the number of women participating in decision-making at all levels, including the application of special temporary measures pursuant to paragraph 1 article 4 of the Convention, which strengthen activities aimed at promoting women to leadership posts, both in the public and private sector, through special training programmes and campaigns to raise awareness of the importance of their participation in the country's political life.

The progress achieved through implementation of the National Policy on Women, particularly in the area of civic and political participation, has been reflected in a substantial increase in women's participation in electoral events and an increase in the number women in síndica and regidora posts in municipal councils.

The specific strategy for increasing the number of women in decision-making, contained in the National Policy on Women (civic and political participation area) is to "increase women's social and political participation by promoting participation by women as leaders with a view to achieving equal access to power for women and men." To achieve this, the following strategic objectives are being pursued:

- Promote women's participation in local development, to increase their decision-making capacity."
- "Promote the exercise of women's civic and political rights and their social recognition".
- "Develop women's capacity and leadership, to gain access to decision-making and participation and equal opportunities in public and private structures."

The Committee notes a lack of gender-specific data in the reports presented, and insufficient information on indigenous women.

In coordination with the Directorate General of Statistics and Censuses of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, ISDEMU is implementing activities aimed at producing gender-specific data, such that forthcoming reports at the international level will be broken down by age, sex, geographic location, etc. In compliance with the National Policy on Women, this population group is being singled out for the purpose of inclusion in national and specific strategies to improve their situation.

With regard to women of indigenous origin, government institutions are currently making efforts to raise the profile of this population group, which has long been excluded from specific policies.

Annexes

- Institutions with which implementation of the National Policy on Women (PNM) is being coordinated.

Office of the Prosecutor-General of the Republic (PGR), Supreme Court of Justice, (CSJ), National Council of the Judiciary, (CNJ), Ministry of Education, (MINED), Salvadoran Social Security Institute, (ISSS), Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance, (MSPAS); Military Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Security, (MINTPS); Salvadoran Institute for the Promotion of Cooperativism, (INSAFOCOP); Salvadoran Institute INSAFORP, Salvadoran Institute of Municipal Development, (ISDEM); Supreme Electoral Tribunal,(TSE); Local Development Investment Fund (FISDL); National Secretariat for the Family, (SNF); Office of the Prosecutor General of the Republic); Social Fund for the Family, (FOSOFAMILIA), National Council for Culture and Art, (CONCULTURA), Office of the Attorney General of the Republic, (FGR) , Salvadoran Institute for the Protection of Children and Adolescents, (ISNA), National Civil Police, (PNC); Banco de Fomento Agropecuario, (BFA); the National School of Agriculture, (ENA); , UFAG, DGA, DAA, DGFCR, OCP, PRODERNOR, PRODAP II, PRODERT Y CENTA. Ministry of the Interior (MINGOB); Directorate of Public Shows, Radio El Salvador; National Institute of Sports of El Salvador; (INDES); Olympic Committee of El Salvador, (COES), Association of Sportsmen and Sportswomen in Wheelchairs, (ASADESIR), Badminton Federation, Fencing Federation, Cycling Federation, Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources, (MARN); National Institute of Pensions; Pensions Superintendency; Directorate General of Statistics and Census, Attached to the Ministry of Finance (DIGESTYC), Inter-American Commission on Women of the Organization of American States (CIM/OAS).

Non-governmental institutions.

CI AMUR, AZO, ADS, UTEC, UJMD, UCA AMUR, FE Y ALEGRÍA Y CCC. ADS, CALMA, CARE DE EL SALVADOR. FSV, PLAN INTERNACIONAL, PARROQUIA SAN LUIS MARIONA, CCNIS.

- Institutions forming part of the Inter-institutional Agreement for Prevention and Services in Respect of Domestic Violence:

Judicial branch, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance, Ministry of Education, Office of the Attorney General of the Republic, Office of the Prosecutor General of the Republic, Salvadoran Institute of Municipal Development, Salvadoran Institute for the Protection of Children and Adolescents, Ministry of National Defence, Salvadoran Social Security Institute, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Salvadoran Red Cross, Inter-American Commission on Women, (CIM/OEA), Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women.

Structure of the National Policy on Women